PACESETTER

#5

$12.95

The GEORGE PEREZ Magazine

FOR PÉREZ FANS • • BY PÉREZ FANS

PACESETTER
The George Pérez Magazine

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This issue celebrates George's 30 years in comics. This issue has all the usual... articles, artwork, checklist, interviews, news and more. What makes this issue special is: not only is it a double sized issue—128 pages!—but this issue has an all-star line up of contributors! Jim Krueger, Kurt Busiek, Tom Smith, Tom Brevoort, Tony Isabella, Steve Englehart, Jerry Ordway, J.A. Fludd, Andy Mangels and more... don't miss out on this very special issue. This issue's cover was colored by the awesome Tom Smith.

NEXT ISSUE'S QUESTION:
What do you feel was George Pérez's contribution to making WONDER WOMAN a success? What did he do that others didn't?

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PACESETTER
The George Pérez Magazine

FOR PÉREZ FANS • • BY PÉREZ FANS

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F•R•O•M T•H•E P•U•B•L•I•S•H•E•R

Wow, has it really been thirty years that George has been in the comic business? I've been along for 28 of them. It seems like yesterday when I bought my first comic... when my mom gave me some money for helping around the house. My dad was in Anchorage, Alaska, on a year tour of duty with the Air Force, so I was the man around the house while he was gone. My best friend at the time already collected comics and he was the one to turn me on to them. With the money that my mom gave me I headed to the nearest drug store that sold comics. When I got there, there was old fashioned magazine rack spinner with about 50 comics to choose from. I could only buy one and it must have taken me a half hour to pick one. Buying my first house was easier! The book I bought was THE FANTASTIC FOUR issue 171, and it happened to be drawn by none other than George himself. But truly I bought it for the awesome cover by Jack Kirby. Once I got past the cover and into the book, I was hooked, and it had a lot to do with George's awesome art. Without really knowing until years later when I became more aware of the creators, the first four books that I bought were drawn by George: FF 171, AVENGERS 149, AVENGERS 150, and FF 172. It kind of blew my mind that George was the artist on every book I was buying! I was really attracted to his work. It seemed that George was drawing every book out at the time.

Here's my answer to the question of the issue: "Why is George as popular as ever even after thirty years in the business?" I don't think there is one real answer to this question. Here are a few reasons I think George is still the man. Reason one, George is always trying to improve his art. Every time a new comic is drawn by George, the art is better than his previous book. George is very conscious of that. As years go by, you see a lot of former super star artists whose art doesn't have that same excitement they used to. George has told me that he does not want to take a step back as an artist; he wants to continue to learn and improve. Reason two, you never hear about a bad experience meeting George at convention. George is always very open to his fans. George knows how important the fans are to the comic industry. You hear a lot of horror stories about other artists being cold to their fans, and I've had a few myself. Lastly it is really awesome how he gives, how many countless hours he donates drawing and signing autographs for some very worthy charities. From his humble beginnings to where George is at today, George knows the importance of giving back, and that's pretty cool.

I really want to thank everyone involved with this double sized special issue. I'm very happy with the issue and I hope George is too. George has been making people like me very happy over the last thirty years. George has helped me escape—if just for a little while—the crazy stuff going on in the world, and I want to thank him for that. I'm along for the ride as long as George wants to drive.

No time resting on our laurels! I need contributors for the next issue of PACESETTER, the Wonder Woman themed issue. I need all the usual:, articles, artwork, trivia, news, and more… e-mail at Tlorenz101@aol.com for info. Remember, if you contribute and article or have art from George that you can share you can receive free copy or discount if the art or article appears. Like I've said a hundred times before this magazine is only as good as the contribution. After the Wonder Woman issue will be a Crisis issue, so start brainstorming folks.

~ Tony Lorenz

TRIVIA

Be on the lookout for the Pointing Hand or the Exclamation Mark throughout this issue for little known facts and amazing trivia!

ASK THE PROS

Checking in with the crew!

PACESETTER took some time out and asked a few pros, "Why is George as popular as ever, even after being in the business for thirty years?"

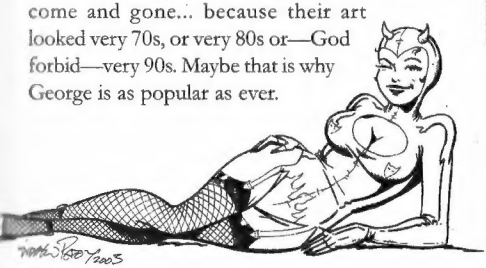
Hi I'm **Jim Krueger,** I've worked on Earth X Trilogy with Alex Ross, I've also written Foot Soldier, Last Strawman, and I'm working on a secret JLA story that I hope is not a secret when this sees print.

When it comes to George all the comics that I loved were either drawn by George or Jack Kirby.

I remember Logan's Run, Man-Wolf, Avengers, Fantastic Four, JLA and all that stuff. When I open a book drawn by George it would be so great. It was something I couldn't get from a movie or book. Not only the sense of detail, but the pacing too. That was so exciting for me. I remember just loving the Teen Titans. George was and will always be one of my favorite artists in this field. He is why I love comics in a world of video games, movies and books.

Hi I'm **Andrew Pepoy**; I work on GI Joe, Micronauts, and Scooby Doo.

As far as George, it's hard to pinpoint. George has a style that transcended all the fads that have come and gone. His work looked ahead of its time in the 1970s and it still looks modern and not dated like many other artists. Maybe that is why George has remained popular while many other artist have come and gone... because their art looked very 70s, or very 80s or—God forbid—very 90s. Maybe that is why George is as popular as ever.



Rob Jones, Dick Giordano's assistant.

I think the reason why George Pérez is as popular as ever is that good art never goes out of style. George gives you more in a page than anybody could dream of... down to the finest line; it's perfect. Every time you open a book drawn by George, his art never goes out of style.

Walt Simonson, currently working on Elric for DC comics.

I still think he's putting too much into it. He needs to ease up, knock off some of those panels and quit doing all that rendering, simplify his art. But George is George and that's why the fans love him.

Angel Medina, artist on Spawn.

George doesn't compromise his art. It is known that George doesn't want his work to suffer, so he puts the effort into it, as to where a lot of artists after many years their priorities change, which is understandable, but then they don't give their work as much effort.

George is one of those guys where you can still read the energy in his work because he is not tired of it and doesn't *want* to be tired of it.

Barry Kitson, artist on Legion of Super-Heroes.

George encapsulates all the best qualities I think a comic book artist should have; he's incredibly talented, enthusiastic and dedicated, a great storyteller and—by no means the least of these—an extremely nice man to boot!

FROM THE RUBBLE... A RELATIONSHIP!

by Andy Mangels

It always seems to come down to the rubble. Ask just about any comic book professional what first drew them to the artwork of George Pérez, and the answer, six times out of ten, will likely be "the rubble." The other four answers will likely be something related to "detail" and "storytelling." But anyone who has ever known or worked with George Pérez will tell you that the magic that's in George's art is also there in his heart.

Flashback to 1977: I was ten years old, earning my own funds by working in cherry orchards or picking raspberries and selling them in roadside stands on the east lake shore of Flathead Lake in northwestern Montana. I could use those funds to buy comics when we went to the store. The market three miles away only ever had a handful of comics, but the grocery store 12 miles away had a better selection. Although I was mainly a DC fan, I bought a handful of Marvel titles. I don't recall regularly reading FANTASTIC FOUR, but I bought issue #184 that Spring day of 1977 for one reason: the cover art by George Pérez.

The FF were fighting a giant red cyborg calling himself The Eliminator, and it appeared as if they had been defeated. Depicted as they fell in the old house, the floor and staircase were blasted to rubble, clearly by the Eliminator's energy-emanating hand. I didn't yet know that the energy contained patented "Kirby dots" because at the age of ten, I had not yet discovered the keen excitement of having a "favorite artist."

George Pérez soon became that "favorite artist." I followed him through Marvel books and over to DC, glad he was finally drawing characters I loved better. And then, wonder of all wonders, he took on THE NEW TEEN TITANS. The original TEEN TITANS #8 ("A Killer Called Honey Bun," also featuring a robot on the cover) had been one of the first comics I owned, and I loved that team.

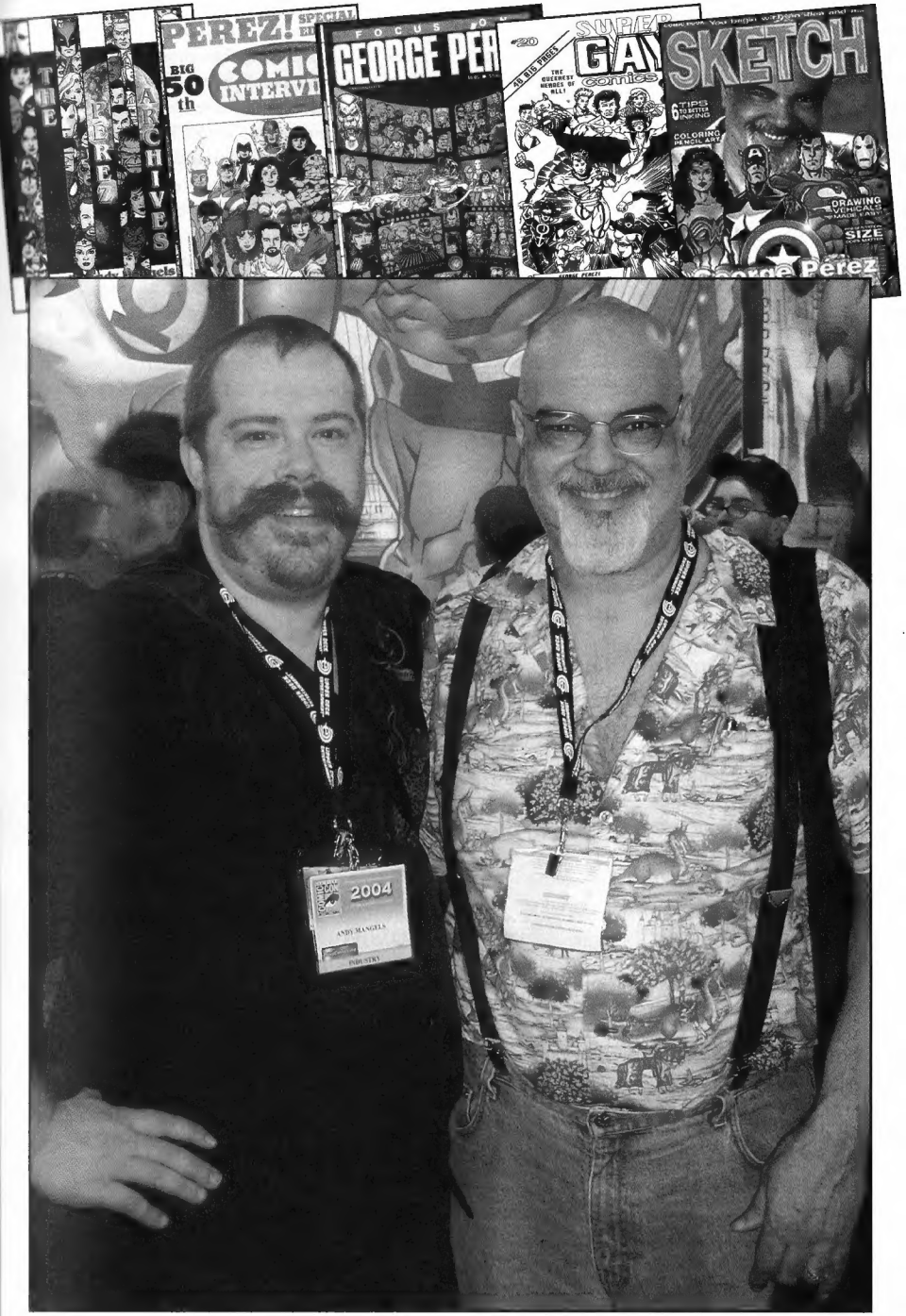
1983: I got to meet George for the first time at San Diego Comic-Con. He was, in fact, the reason I attended the con. I was a young fanboy and he treated me with the same respect and enthusiasm that I've seen him do with fans of all ages in the time since. Shortly thereafter, I joined an APA (Amateur Publishing Association) called Titan Talk. This was a fan club precursor to today's Yahoo groups and blogs. I met lots of people who shared my enthusiasm and passion for the Titans and George Pérez, many of whom also wanted to work in comics. Two of its members were Rob Liefeld and Hank Kanalz (both of whom now work in comics!).

1985: At sixteen, I was in college early, and was pursuing a degree in art, determined to draw comics for a living. Rob and Hank told me about a book that Fantagraphics was working on called FOCUS ON GEORGE PÉREZ. I immediately contacted them and asked to be involved, but I had no previous publishing or writing experience, so doing the Pérez interview was out. Nevertheless, Kim Thompson was impressed by my knowledge of Pérez arcana, so I soon had an assignment to produce an exhaustive Pérez checklist and trivia section. I worked closely with George by phone and mail to make certain nothing was missed.

FOCUS ON GEORGE PÉREZ was published in the fall of 1985, at the same time CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS was being released by DC. The following March, I got some of my first work for AMAZING HEROES magazine in issue #91's focus on Crisis. The summer of 1986, I also attended my second San Diego Comic-Con, meeting up with George again, and his wife, Carol Flynn. We took some pictures together (my trademark giant red moustache was barely there then), and hatched plans for me to do a massive interview with George... the one I hadn't been able to do for the Focus book. I also bought some of my first original Pérez artwork there, some Titans pages from issue #18 featuring Red Star.

1987: I did a massive interview with George for Fictioneer's magazine, COMICS INTERVIEW. Published as the 146-page 50th issue, the all-Pérez special featured a 127-page interview and oodles of rare artwork. We discussed everything conceivable about George's career to that point. I was incredibly proud of this interview, which Fictioneer excerpted in numerous publications over the next several years.

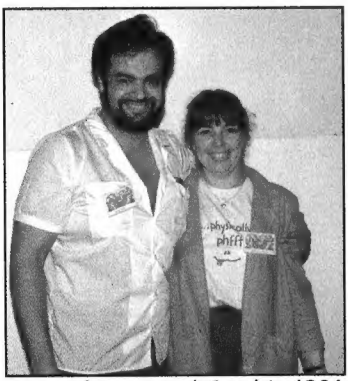
The interview led to two things: one good



Andy Mangels and George Pérez at the San Diego Comic-Con 2004

Andy and George in 1986

and one bad. Happily, George made a gift to me of a colored Aquaman sketch that had been among the originals I catalogued for the interview. On the negative side, STARLOG assigned me to do a small interview with George; he had just finished the major one with me and suggested that I use quotes from it. I thought this had been cleared with my editor, but soon found out that the editor-in-chief was not as understanding. I was summarily fired from the piece, and banned from working for STARLOG again. Additionally, the editor-in-chief also decreed that my name as a comic book author would never be allowed to appear in STARLOG again (and to my knowledge, it hasn't, to this day). Luckily, my relationship with the actual editor remained positive; he's now a big-shot Hollywood producer, and we meet again every year at San Diego.



George and Carol in 1986

1988: In February's AMAZING HEROES #135 I produced "George Pérez Speaks: Another, Slightly Smaller, Interview" article and interview with George, plus checklist revisions and additions to the FOCUS piece. I also covered George's run on WONDER WOMAN for the AMAZING HEROES PREVIEW SPECIALS in 1988-1990, and did yet another interview with him for January 1989's AMAZING HEROES #156.

In 1989, I also lucked into two valuable pieces of Pérez art. I wrote some scripts for Steve Schanes at Blackthorne for a NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET IN 3-D comic book. When the series was cancelled before publication, Schanes felt bad that he couldn't pay me the money he owed me so he gave me two Pérez covers as payment. They were the covers to the Eclipse Justice League of America indexes, and thus George's version of the entire JLA teams in exciting images!

Although I remained a working comic book, magazine and book writer throughout the 1990s, my direct interactions with George were few and far between. Eclipse published a series of FAMOUS COMIC BOOK CREATORS trading cards in 1991, and utilized one of my photos of George for his card. In the fall of 1993, George inked the cover to GAY COMICS #20, an award-winning anthology I was editing. Penciling the cover (an homage to GIANT-SIZE X-MEN #1) was J.A. Fludd, a Pérez-influenced artist and fan. It was the first (and only) time that George drew a character I created: the gay super-hero Pride. It was also a de facto (and little-known) DC/Marvel cross-over, with ghosted images of Legionnaires and Northstar reacting in horror to the "out" heroes below them.

George was the guest at a convention in Portland, Oregon in June 1997, and I got to spend a significant amount of time with him then. I gave him a tour of Portland's downtown and Rose Gardens and greatly enjoyed catching up with him. He also did a wonderful Winnie the Pooh as The Thing (and Piglet as The Porcine Torch) sketch for my partner, Don Hood.

2001: I got the crazy idea to self-publish a book of Pérez's work to benefit the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund. THE PÉREZ ARCHIVES was the culmination of six months of work (over 400 hours by myself alone) that included lots of donated production time and printing costs, plus contributions of artwork from all over the globe. At 154 pages (plus covers) the ARCHIVES catalogued every bit of Pérez's published art, as well as presenting mounds of never-published sketches, pages, and trivia. A deluxe edition featured 34 extra pages of more rare, unpublished, and published artwork!

THE PÉREZ ARCHIVES was released on July 19, 2001 at the San Diego Comic-Con. George and I did several signings at the CBLDF booth, and the ARCHIVES sold briskly. I also interviewed him for a "Spotlight on George Pérez" panel, and spent some time with him at the CrossGen booth, where George was doing free sketches (and where millionaire Mark Alessi sniffed that he thought the ARCHIVES were overpriced!). At the con and online, the ARCHIVES sold out in less than a year, generating nearly $7,000 for the CBLDF.

Also at the con, I handed out my new business cards, which featured an image that George had drawn of me for the cover of the ARCHIVES book. When asked where I wanted to be placed, I asked to be next to Wonder Woman, my favorite heroine. The only problem with using the art for my card was that a third of my face was cut off by the border, but that was barely a speed-bump with today's technology. Using Photoshop, I flopped and edited the image so both halves of my face were visible, including my now-giant red moustache!

Though I wouldn't find out until later, this was actually the second time that George had drawn me. The first was in a large panel on page 14 of CRIMSON PLAGUE #2, on a viewscreen wall of comic creators. I'm last on the right of the third row, next to (I think) Joe Quesada. George later gave the page to me as a gift.

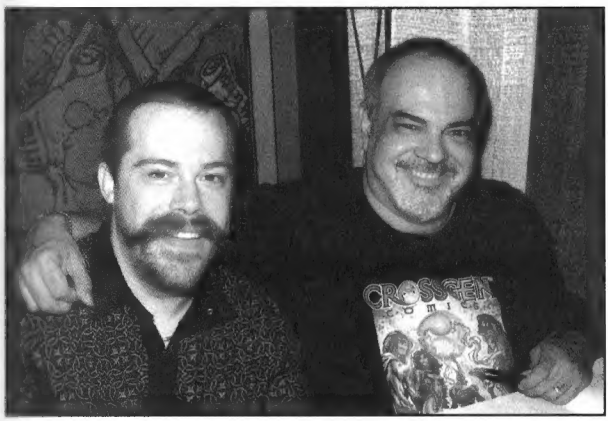
Later in 2001, I did another mammoth interview with George for SKETCH MAGAZINE #10, published by Blue Line Pro. Though riddled with spelling errors, tiny print, and miniscule artwork, the piece updated all my previous interviews with George, and focused on how he constructs his art.

2003: I got to visit with George briefly again at the San Diego Comic-Con in July, though - surprisingly—we were both autographing at the CrossGen booth (I wasn't working directly for Alessi, but sub-imprint MVCreations). George did a great Green Arrow sketch for my chosen son, Paul Smalley.

We also discussed two projects for TwoMorrows. I was providing much of the artwork for Eric Nolen-Weathington's MODERN MASTERS: GEORGE PÉREZ volume to be released that Fall, and I was supposed to do an interview reuniting George and Marv Wolfman for the debut issue of TwoMorrows' new magazine, BACK ISSUE.

While circumstances conspired to make George unavailable for the discussion as planned, we conducted a three-way phone interview a short time later. The resulting "Pro to Pro" story ran forty pages of BACK ISSUE #1. It also helped reignite the argument to the "Powers That Be" at DC that they had 71 pages of art for a TITANS: GAMES graphic novel finished by George and Marv; why weren't they completing and publishing it?

My latest association with George was also related to a TwoMorrows project. For BACK ISSUE #5's focus on the 1970s Wonder Woman TV series, I wanted an all-star artistic salute to Lynda Carter. Despite his hand injuries, George agreed to do the piece, and to make it a gift for all the birthdays and holidays for which he'd known me. Unfortunately, time and his injury stopped George from finishing the piece, but at San Diego Comic-Con in July 2004, he promised he'd eventually get it done. I have editor Michael Eury's promise that it'll run in BACK ISSUE as soon as it's turned in.



Andy and George in 2001, signing copies of the PÉREZ ARCHIVES for CBLDF.

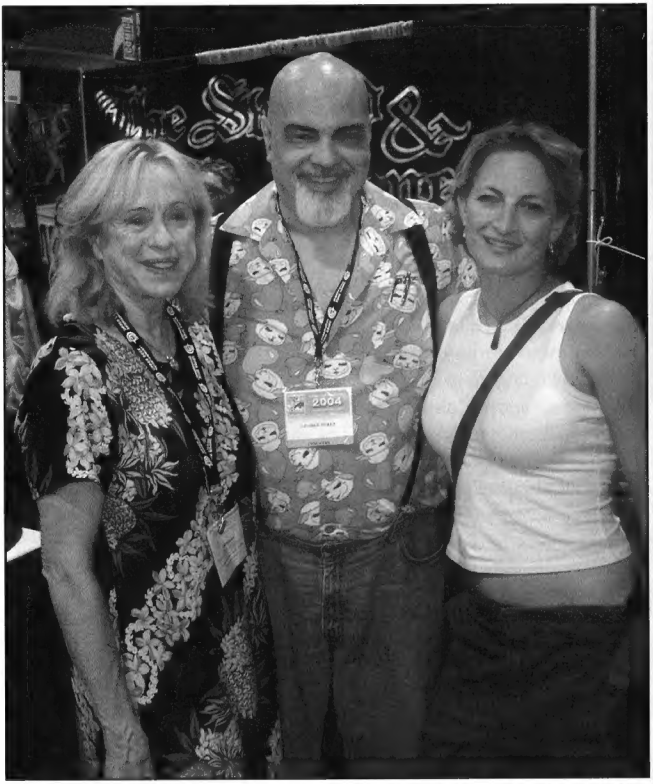
Also at San Diego, I got the opportunity to introduce George to two lovely

women: Jeannie Epper, the stuntwoman for Wonder Woman, and Zoe Bell, the stuntwoman for Xena, Kill Bill, and Catwoman. I'd done a panel with them for the documentary *Double Dare: The Movie*, and wanted to be certain that in their two-hour whirlwind tour of the con, they got to meet one of the men I consider to be not just the reigning king of comic art, but a good friend as well.

And that friendship has endured. George is celebrating his thirty years in comics, and I have been fortunate enough to know him for twenty-one of those years. Our paths have crossed and moved apart with regularity; I'm writing best-selling novels these days and not much comic book material, while George is at the top of his game with JLA/AVENGERS and the upcoming TITANS: GAMES graphic novel. We've talked about working together on some comic book project in the future, and George jokes that it will happen before either of us goes to the grave. Meanwhile, work on THE PÉREZ ARCHIVES 2 stops and starts, but 2005 should bring some exciting news on that front. Anyone with art to contribute can contact me through my webpage.

Who knows where I would be today if I hadn't have fallen in love with the rubble drawn by George on the cover of FANTASTIC FOUR #184. While some other creator might have piqued my interest if not George, it was my love for George's work in particular that got me published for the first time as a writer. Would I have the writing career I do now if I hadn't have moved in that direction, spurred on by my writing rather than by my art? In my art classes, I knew I never had the talent to be comicdom's next George Pérez. But in my writing career, I've carved out my own legacy, and I'm lucky enough that it has intersected with George as many times as it has.

Relationships and rubble... George Pérez the artist may draw in readers with his detail, his storytelling, or his rubble. George Pérez the man has drawn a rich life by being pleasant, conscientious, fair-minded, and gregarious. Both aspects of George inspire me... and I suspect they inspire everyone who knows him. Those are the real keys to George's thirty-year career, and they will sustain him through all the many years he will dazzle us in the future.



Jeannie, George & Zoe at the San Diego Comic-Con '04

—Andy Mangels is the best-selling author and co-author of over a dozen books—including Star Trek and Star Wars books—and is an award-winning comic book anthology editor. He has written hundreds of articles for entertainment and lifestyle magazines and newspapers in the United States, England, and Italy.

Visit his webpage at www.andymangels.com

INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE PÉREZ

by Tony Lorenz – November 2004

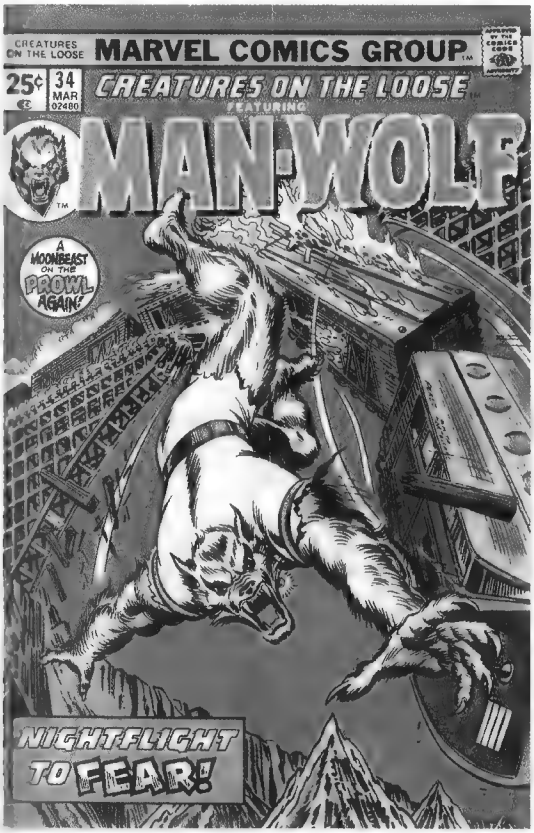
30 Years in the Biz

TL: *Wow, thirty years in comics, how does that feel?*

GPz: Like I'm 30 years older—and yet, paradoxically, I've never felt so young. I guess that's what happens when you've spent over half your life doing exactly what you love to do. I'm just so incredibly grateful that the fans and the publishers still want to buy my stuff.

TL: *Over the thirty years in the industry, what are some of the things that you are most proud of?*

GPz: Oh, God, where could I start? I've been amazingly fortunate in having been involved in a lot of landmark publications in those three decades. I'm proud of helping to bring DC Comics back from the brink in 1980 when Marv Wolfman, Len Wein and I put together THE NEW TEEN TITANS. I'm proud of my work on CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS and I thank Marv for giving me the confidence to take on WONDER WOMAN as a writer as well as artist. The fact that it's still the template for the current version of the character is a personal triumph for me.



CREATURES ON THE LOOSE: FEATURING MAN-WOLF #34 March 1975 features pencils by George Pérez/John Romita Sr./Mortellaro

My "comeback" on THE AVENGERS in the late 1990s was also personally—not to mention professionally—satisfying. And of course I got to realize my fanboy dream when I finally got to draw the JLA/AVENGERS crossover. It didn't hurt that its sales allowed me to really enjoy my 30th anniversary (as well as my 50th birthday) in style. This year I've done the least amount of work I've ever done in any year of my career, because I could afford to. The rest really did me good. I'm now really itching to get back in the game.

And of course, I am incredibly proud that, for the last twenty-four years of those thirty years, I've shared my life and success with the beautiful and wonderful Carol Flynn whom I met while I was drawing Issue 8 of THE NEW TEEN TITANS, the pivotal *A Day In the Lives…* that marked the turning point for the series. We were married on June 26th, 1981—my career's 7th anniversary. My wedding day and day I became an independent freelancer are the same, so it's always a double celebration.

TL: *What is the biggest difference between George of today and George of thirty years ago?*

GPz: Well, I have less hair on my head and more flesh on my waist, but I suppose you're ask-

ing about my artistic growth. I think that my bag of tricks has gotten bigger. There are more things I can do easily than when I started in the business. I believe my ability to draw a wider variety of characters with distinctive features is what has allowed me to remain successful as an artist specializing in team books.

I also have the great honor of having been around long enough to have influenced or inspired so many newer artists. And they in turn inspire me. If there's one thing that hasn't changed, it's my own insecurity with my own finished work. I always see my flaws and when I look at some of the artists out there I feel that there is still so much I need to learn. Honestly, though, I hope I never lose that insecurity. It's the thing that makes me strive to get better. To be the best that I can be may be an unattainable goal, but it keeps me from ever getting complacent.

TL: *Along the way you've worked with a lot of creators that have helped make what your are today. Who is on top of that list and why?*

GPz: Oh no you don't. I can't choose among so many. How can I measure Marv Wolfman against Kurt Busiek? Or against Roy Thomas, Steve Englehart, Peter David, David Michelinie, Len Wein, Barbara Kesel, Mark Waid, Jim Shooter and so many others?

How can I put an incredible editor like Karen Berger ahead of equally great editors like Tom Brevoort, Archie Goodwin, Eddie Berganza, etc.?

And how can I choose from super inkers like Terry Austin, Jerry Ordway, Joe Sinnott, Mike Perkins, Dennis Jensen, Pablo Marcos, Al Vey, Joe Rubinstein and all the rest?

Or colorists like Tom Smith, Laura Martin, Adrienne Roy, Glynis Wein, Tom Ziuko and more?

I have been incredibly blessed to have worked with all these great creators. And that's just as a penciler. As a writer and inker I've had the honor of working with Curt Swan, José Garcia-Lopez, Ross Andru, Gil Kane, Carmine Infantino and so many who inspired me to become a comics artist. God, how could I ever choose among all of them?

The great thing about working with so many talented creators is that so many of them have expressed wishes to work with me again. Now, isn't that cool?

TL: *The future... what can we look from you and what are some of your dream projects?*

GPz: Well, Marv and I will finally get to finish GAMES: THE TITANS GRAPHIC NOVEL which we started almost fifteen years ago. Al Vey had already inked 30 of the 70 pages completed way back then and Mike Perkins will be inking the rest of the pages, including the ones I'll be drawing in 2005. Another fun project will be inking my idol José

CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS
#10 of 12
January 1986 with pencils by George

Garcia-Lopez on a four-part story written by Phil Jimenez. I'm not at liberty, at this writing, to say any more about that, but I'm hoping to get the artistic education of a lifetime.

TL: *Thanks George!*

GPz: Thank you, Tony. I also want to add to the list of people who've helped make me what I am today all my fans, all those incredibly generous guys and gals who've not only supported my career, but have gone all out to help preserve and share what legacy I might have with so many others. People like you and Marcus Mébes who produce this magazine, Andy Mangels (publisher of THE PEREZ ARCHIVES as well as many interviews and articles about me), Vu Nguyen (creator of the www.george-perez.com website) and others have flattered me so much more than I could ever truly deserve.

And of course, there's always Carol, my biggest fan and greatest inspiration. Great wife, great fans, great job, great life. What an incredibly lucky guy I've been.

WONDER WOMAN #3
April 1987
features pencils by George

DID YOU KNOW...?

The only reason George drew the NEW TEEN TITANS is that DC promised that he could draw at least one issue of the JUSTICE LEAGUE.

GULLIVAR JONES UNLEASHED

by Tony Isabella

I have a "George story" for you. I'll warn you right at the start that it may not be 100% accurate because a) it happened over thirty years ago, and b) memory isn't perfect. I have an industry friend, for example, who has heard some of my stories enough times that he now believes he was present when they occurred. He's even told them to other people, often giving himself a large role in the proceedings. I never call him on it because a) he's my friend, and b) I take a certain odd pleasure watching someone rewrite my life. We are all stories.

George Pérez, it must be noted, is one of my favorite artists. This, despite the fact that he does everything wrong. I mean; look at all those panels on his pages... and all the people doing things in those panels...and all the intricate backgrounds that make the *Where's Waldo* artists look like slackers. He's never going to get anywhere in this business.

If other artists put as much into their panels and pages, the work would look crowded. With George, it looks complete.

A small panel reflects a larger world. The people within it don't look crowded. Actions don't appear compressed. Backgrounds tie them to the larger world that each succeeding panel builds on. George pulls you into their world.

Having thus established my love and admiration for George, I can now take you back through the corridors of time into that era largely forgotten by mankind. The '70s.

I was a perhaps-too-young editor and writer at Marvel Comics. Among my editorial charges was a black-and-white horror magazine by the name of MONSTERS UNLEASHED. One of the many rotating features in the magazine was "Gullivar Jones, Warrior of Mars," an Edgar Rice Burroughs-type interplanetary adventurer which editor-in-chief Roy Thomas had licensed for Marvel.

The first of two Gullivar Jones stories to appear in MONSTERS UNLEASHED had been drawn by Dave Cockrum and written by me. If I may be allowed the moment of pride, I thought it turned out really well. Dave wasn't available for the second story, so I turned to another young artist who I thought was one of the best working in comics at the time.

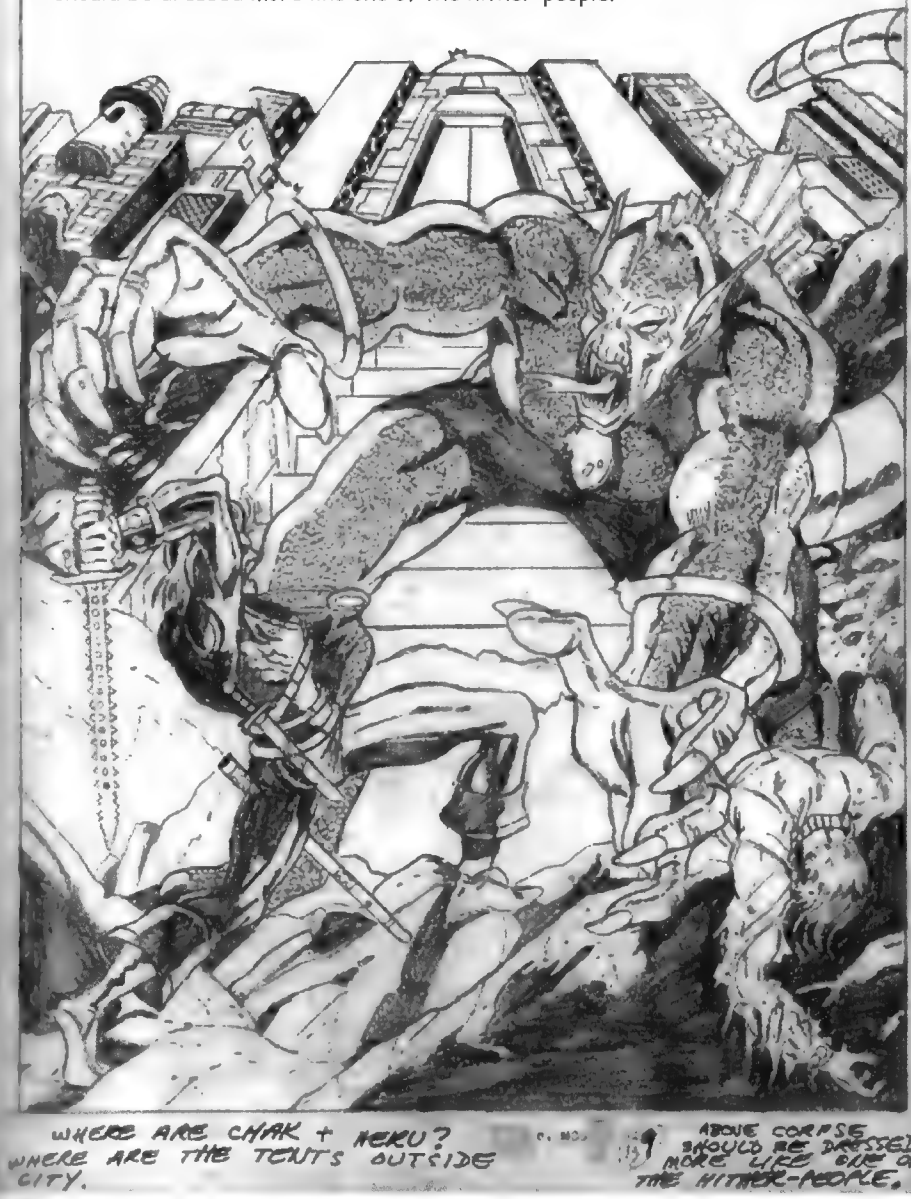
Panel from DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU #6, November 1974, page 8, inked by Frank Springer

Not so fast. It wasn't George. George was working as an assistant for this artist. I can't recall if I'd met George prior to this. What I do remember is that I got two unpleasant surprises when the art for this story arrived on my desk.

The first surprise was that the artist had changed my original story with its hopeful ending into a muddled mess with a downbeat ending. The second was that he hadn't drawn the story himself. He had given it to his assistant to draw.

George.

This page was supposed to have been the opening splash for a story in MONSTERS UNLEASHED #8. Since this was very early in George's career (1975), the page was first laid out by Rich Buckler. It was then penciled with extreme detail by Pérez. It was then supposed to have been inked by Pablo Marcos, however it was rejected by the editor and redrawn. The editor's comments read: "Where are Chak + Heru? Where are the tents outside city. Above corpse should be dressed more like one of the hither-people."



MONSTERS UNLEASHED #8, Oct. 1974, inked by Duffy Vohland (uncredited assists by John Byrne and Bob Layton)

lettered pages as I handed them to Duffy Vohland, who worked through a weekend to get the pages inked. The result was not pretty, not on any level, but it was arguably better than blank pages in the middle of MONSTERS UNLEASHED.

Don't look at me that way. I come to praise George Pérez, not to bury him. Just stay with me here.

I'm not going to sugar-coat this. I hated, absolutely hated, what had become of my story. I hated the plot changes and didn't care for the pencilled art. To make matters worse, the story was already running late—not George's fault—and I knew I couldn't fix it. I abandoned the scripting to another writer—thanks for the save, Doug Moench—and barely looked at the

I didn't blame George for any of this. He was a friendly and eager guy—you couldn't not like him—and, as much as I disliked his work on the Gullivar Jones story, I thought he had potential. I also thought he would have a much better chance of realizing that potential working on his own. So I assigned him the "Sons of

LIN SUN DOES NOT ANSWER! THE SUMO HAS FORCED ALMOST ALL THE AIR FROM HIS BODY AND WHAT REMAINS HE MUST USE TO HAMMER AWAY AT THE NEAR-UNCONSCIOUS FORM OF THE GIANT WRESTLER!
BLOOD STREAMS DOWN A FACE THAT IS NO LONGER RECOGNIZABLE! THE ANGER WITHIN LIN SUN HAS BROKEN SOMETHING INSIDE OF HIM, AND HIS FISTS FLAIL AT THE BEATEN PULP BEFORE HIM! YET ALL THE DAMAGE INFLICTED IS NOT DOING A THING TO EASE THE GRIP THAT IS SLOWLY CRUSHING THE SPINE OF THE SON OF THE TIGER!
HOLD ON LIN!
WE'RE COMIN'!
AND EVEN WERE THEY NOT BOUND BY THE OATH, STILL WOULD THEY FEEL THE PAIN THAT IS SCREAMING WITHIN THEIR BROTHER'S MIND!
58

DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU #8, January 1975, page 58, inked by Al Milgrom

...WHOSE LIVES AND TENTS HAVE JUST BEEN PRESERVED.
DON'T EXPECT ANY GRATITUDE FROM THEM, GUL-LI-VAR...
THEIR SPINES MELTED THE DAY THEY ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO BE OUSTED FROM THEIR OWN CITY!
IT SEEMED HERU WAS RIGHT. THE FACES OF THE HITHER-PEOPLE FORMED NOTHING IF NOT A SEA OF APATHY...
...UNTIL, THAT IS, ONE OF THEM SPOTTED--
HERU!!
IT'S THE PRINCESS, HERU--!!

MONSTERS UNLEASHED #8, October 1974, inked by Duffy Vohland
(uncredited assists by John Byrne and Bob Layton)

the Tiger" feature in THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU.

The "Sons" was another of my problem children. The feature's original writer had left. Its replacement writer had left without notice. I didn't have an artist for the strip. One issue, just to fill those pages, I reprinted the first meeting of Captain America and Batroc the Leaper.

I plotted a "Sons" story myself, gave it to George to pencil, and recruited Bill Mantlo from the production department to script my plot and then continue the series. These all turned out to be incredibly good decisions. Bill and George stayed on "Sons" longer than I remained as editor of DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU. They went on to do hundreds of great stories for Marvel Comics. They are proof I didn't completely suck as an editor.

Here's the story I promised at the start of this:

Shortly after the Gullivar Jones disaster, a young woman came up to me at a comics convention and asked me what I thought of the work of George Pérez. I was too exhausted to think about why she would be asking me about an artist whose first work for me hadn't yet appeared, so I responded honestly and less diplomatically than I otherwise might have responded:

"I don't think he's very good."

Clearly, I'd not yet attained the universal beloved-ness with which I am now regarded.

I think the young woman was George's wife. It may have been a sister or a cousin. It probably wasn't George in disguise, but, like I said, it was a long time ago.

The incident stuck in my craw. For those unfamiliar with the word, it's a synonym for stomach, especially the stomach of a lower animal. I try to choose my words well.

Months later, George recounted that conversation to me. Some sixth sense had told me that—someday—I would have to answer for that thoughtless comment.

George asked why I had continued to give him work after that Gullivar Jones job. I was ready with my answer: because I knew he wasn't always going to be not very good.

And I really did know that.

Whatever my failings as an editor, I had an eye for talent. George wasn't the only future superstar who got assignments from me early in his career, but he's among those of which I'm proudest. When I see a spectacular new Pérez comic book, I get chills over how good he became... and how he keeps getting even better.

Congratulations on a brilliant career, George, a career built as much on your dedication and your hard work as on your God-given talents. If you're willing to take another assignment from one of your old editors, it's this:

Keep bringing us those great comic books.

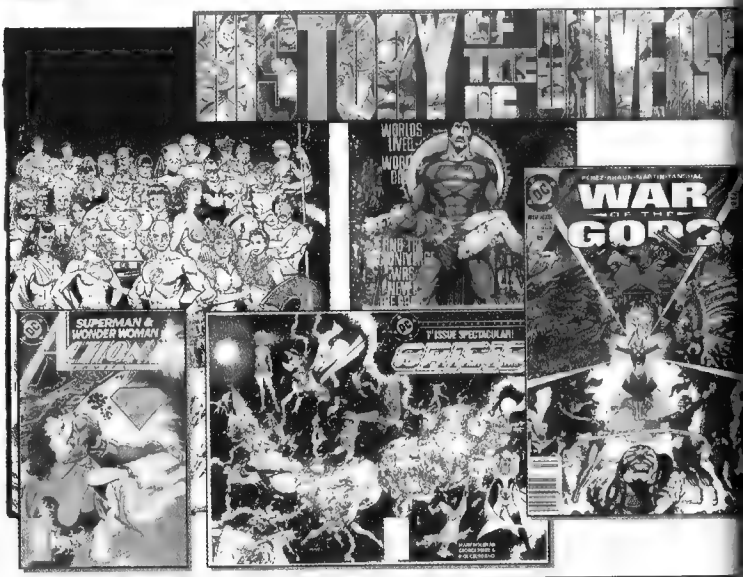
Tony Isabella
Medina, Ohio
September 2, 2004

FOCUS ON: THE FIRST 30 YEARS

by Bobby Nash

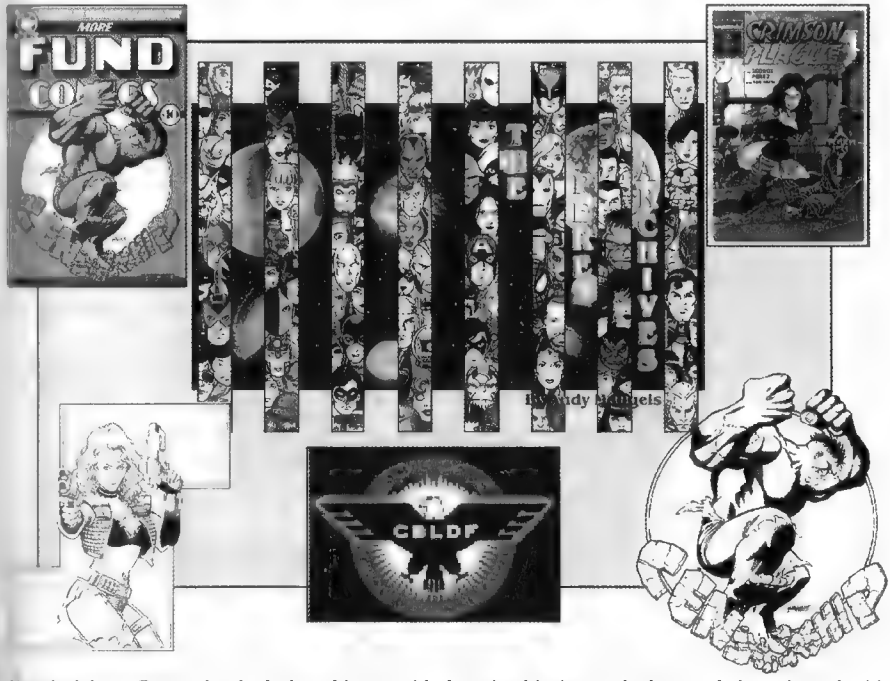
Usually, when it comes time to put together the *Focus On* column I don't have a lot of trouble. I either create a topic or Tony gives me a topic and I dive in to the *Focus On Vault* to find art that fits the criteria. This issue was not that simple. How do I narrow a career that spans thirty years down to ten little images? Not an easy task let me tell you. Finally, I decided to narrow it down to ten milestones of a sort. These are some of the things George is widely recognized for. In some cases, the topic is a little broad, but, hey, it's not easy narrowing all this down. So, in no particular order, let's focus on the milestones of George Pérez.

The Avengers. George Pérez has managed to have not one, but two wildly successful runs featuring Earth's Mightiest Heroes, The Avengers for Marvel Comics.



DC Events. Starting with the mega-crossover Crisis On Infinite Earths, George became the king of grand scale epics featuring more characters per page than ever before. Following Crisis was War of the Gods, spinning off from Wonder Woman, which George was writing at the time.

George goes independent. While most recognized for his Marvel and DC work, George has also worked in other markets as well. Here are just a few examples.

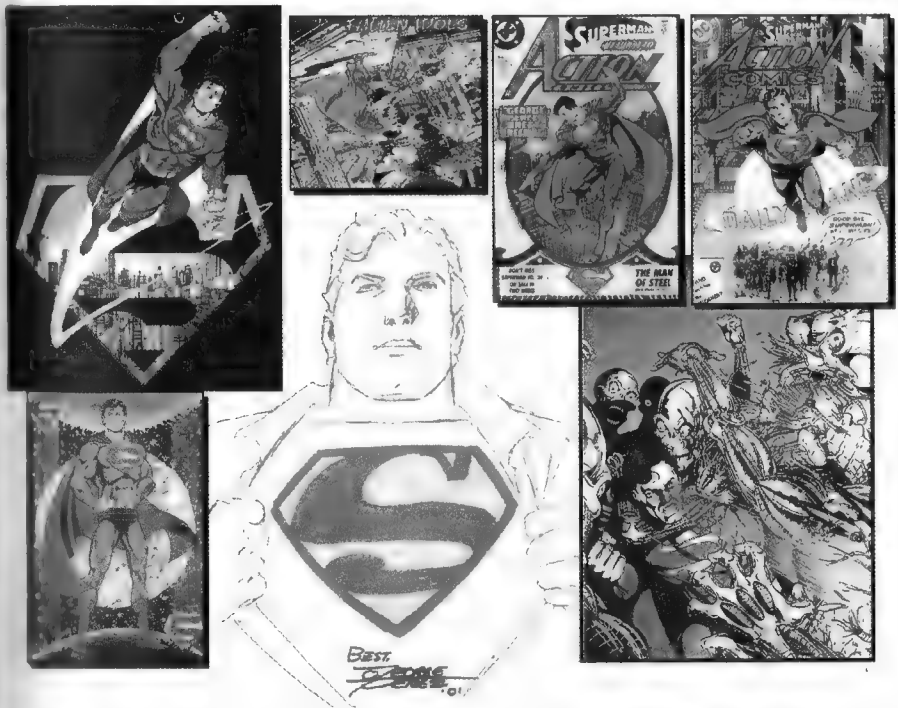


Fundraising. George has had a long history with donating his time and talents to help various charities from Charlotte, North Carolina Fire Department's Burn Unit to the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund to A.C.T.O.R., A Commitment To Our Roots. Sketches done at conventions also help raise money for the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund and A.C.T.O.R.

The Justice League of America. Like the aforementioned Avengers, George has had a wildly successful relationship with the JLA, which introduced a young Mr. Pérez's art to a whole new audience.

JLA/Avengers. The Big One. A lot of characters. Tendonitis. 'nuff said.

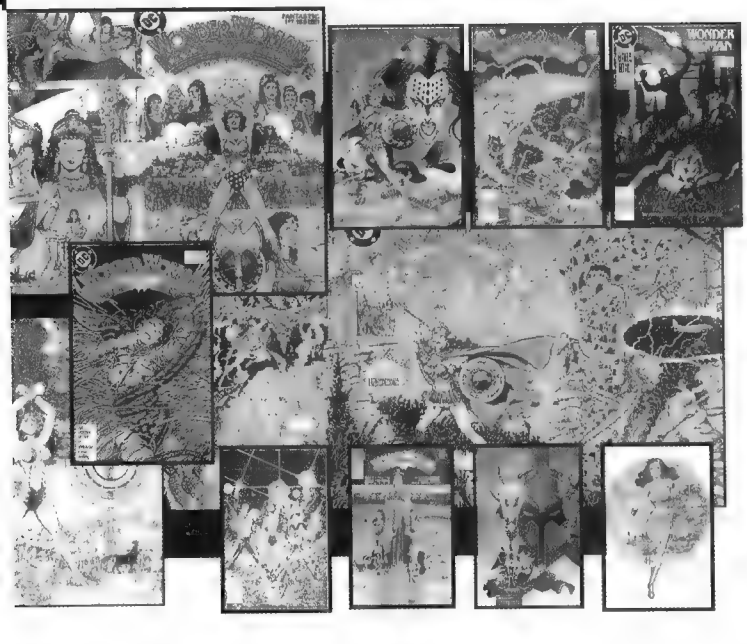
Marvel Events. If Crisis allowed George to draw nearly every DC character, Infinity Gauntlet let him take a stab at Marvel's line up. Another big event was teaming up with Peter David on The Hulk: Future Imperfect. The duo later reteamed for Epic's Sachs & Violens limited series.



Superman. When ACTION COMICS returned from their weekly anthology format to a monthly, George took over the writing and pencil duty on the title, including working on the milestone 650th issue. He also worked on the 600th issue of the title featuring the first post-Crisis team-up of Superman and Wonder Woman, inking over John Byrne's pencils and worked on the final issue of ACTION featuring the pre-Crisis Superman with Alan Moore and Curt Swan.

Titans. If any one title is most associated with George, it's the TITANS. He has worked on nearly every incarnation of the team at some point or another. The Titans became the "it" comic of the 80s, rivaling even the X-Men for popularity for a time. Look for the long awaited graphic novel "Games" coming soon.

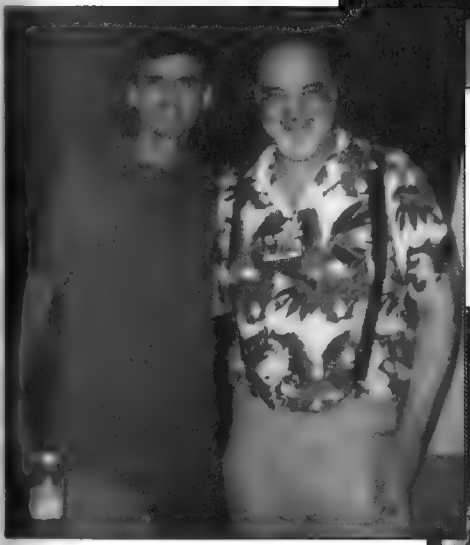
Wonder Woman. Post-Crisis, Princess Diana received an overhaul similar in scope to how BATMAN: YEAR ONE and SUPERMAN: THE MAN OF STEEL restarted Batman and Superman respectively. The plan with Wonder Woman was to take the character back to her mythological roots and the fans loved it. George began as co-plotter and penciller, but soon began scripting as well. By the end of his impressive tenure on the title, he was serving as writer and cover artist.



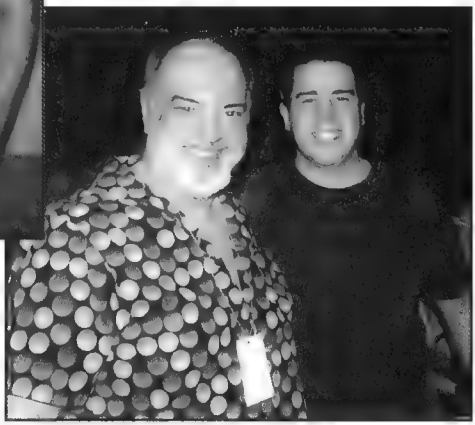
And there you have it, the milestones in broad strokes. Knowing George, he's not finished yet. If you'll allow me a moment for wishful thinking, I would like to see George take over the Fantastic Four as either writer/artist or, even better, penciller over my scripts. Hey, if I'm gonna dream, I have to dream big.

Stephan Varnier and George San Diego Comic Con 2004

We need photos for future issues. So, if you have any photos of The Maestro, please submit them, and you'll get the usual perks!



Ilke Hincer and George at a recent Con.



This picture of Clint Cox with George was taken just a few years ago, but that doesn't mean we can't print it!

The life of a Pérez fan in Europe

To tell the truth, I didn't initially start out as a fan of George Pérez's art. The first artist whose work I instantly started to like was Mark Bagley, whose work on ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN I still enjoy to this very day (not to mention the two sketches hanging on my wall which Mark drew for me at a convention in 1999).

With George, however, it took me some time to grow on his work. When Dino Comics released the two trade paperbacks reprinting the entire CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS maxi-series for the first time in German language back in 1999 (more on the German reprints of George's work can be found at Vu Nguyen's excellent site www.george-perez.com), I did enjoy the story and I also didn't mind the artwork, but I didn't see anything special about the latter part (yet).

It wasn't until Panini Comics started releasing the German version of THE AVENGERS (vol. 3), which was written by one of my favorite comic book writers, Kurt Busiek, that I started to appreciate the effort George put into the pages. To this day, I love his portrayal of the Scarlet Witch as an exotic Eastern European beauty, Hawkeye's broken nose and the big lips, the Wasp's unique hairstyle and all the other trademark tidbits and tons of details George always likes to throw into the mix. Even greater was my surprise when I found out about George's more... private interests, which he likes to slip into his stories whenever possible (everyone who ever read Epic's mature readers' SACHS & VIOLENS limited series, which was never reprinted in Germany, should know what I mean), which make him appear even more likeable, at least to me.

Therefore, I was pretty pleased to hear about George finally getting the chance to draw a JLA/Avengers limited series, which I eventually enjoyed both in the original version and in the translated German version published by Panini.

To this very day, I remain a fan of George's work, and while I won't be picking up every release sporting his name for financial reasons, the name "George Pérez" on the cover of a comic book, be it a new release or a reprint of an older story, is definitely assured to be a factor that would make me consider buying it, if only to enjoy the wonderful art.

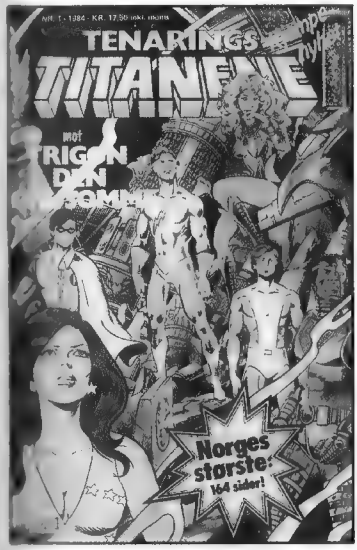
So George, although I wasn't there for the most part of it, thanks for 30 years' worth of wonderful art, stunning perspectives, characters which could be told apart even if their heads were shaved bald, and pages crammed full with more detail than I could seriously hope to be able to count for the rest of my life.

- Torsten B. Abel

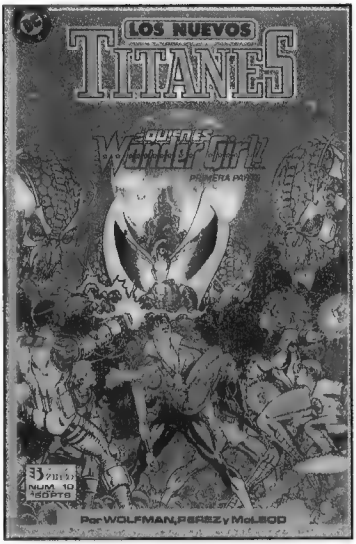
Der Unglaubliche Comic-Taschenbuch #42 (Germany)

PÉREZ COMICS AROUND THE WORLD

Here's a feature I wanted to start last issue, but there just wasn't enough room. I really got this idea from seeing so many posting of foreign Pérez versions of comics on Vu's awesome website. I thought, what a cool feature would be to share it with everyone. So here's my first installment—various Titans incarnations and translations. Let me know what you think of the feature.



TENARINGS TITANENE (Finland) #1 "Trigon den Grusomme!"



LOS NUEVOS TITANES (Spain) #10 "Quien es Wonder Girl?"

OS NOVOS TITAS (Brazil) #20 "Por que Terra traiu os Titas?"

SUPER COMIC
LLEGAN TARDE, HEROES JUVENILES NADA PODRA
LOS NUEVOS HEROES JUVENILES
SALVAR LA TERRA DE LA FURIA DE
TRIGON EL TERRIBLE

SUPER COMIC (México) #6 "Los Nuevos Héroes Juveniles"

COAST TO COAST WITH GENTLEMAN GEORGE PÉREZ

by Eric Sellers

As I was thinking of the best way to honor Mr. George Pérez's thirty years in the comic biz, I decided the best way to honor George was to tell of my convention experiences with George that range from New York City to San Diego (henceforth the title of the article). George is not only a phenomenal artist but the way he treats his fans puts him way above the rest.

I had the good fortune of meeting George at my very first comic convention—Heck, he's the reason I went—the Baltimore Comic Con in 2002. I had arrived a little late on Saturday and they had already capped his line so George could have a lunch break.

I was lucky enough to attend the JLA/AVENGERS Panel (presided by George and Tom Brevoort, the editor) where they showed the cover to JLA/AVENGERS #1. They also opened up the floor to questions after George and Tom had talked a little about the project. They didn't say too much because they wanted to surprise the fans with the story. I asked a question about the info circulating on the internet about the project (I was a novice to the net at that time, but I digress). Tom and George both gave me great answers and resulted in the longest response from them at the panel.

I was able to finally meet George after the panel on the convention floor where I was able to tell him what a big of fan of his work I am and that he had chosen my suggestion for the new title name of PACESETTER for his fanzine. George was also kind enough as he is to all his fans and pose for a picture with me.

I next had the good fortune of seeing George at the Pittsburgh Comic-Con in 2003 where I was able to get two wonderful sketches —Hal Jordan and Firestorm—with the proceeds raised going to charity (as always). George also regaled his fans with behind the scenes stories from the comic books that he's been a part of. George also had a solo JLA/AVENGERS panel in Pittsburgh. He provided some wonderful tidbits on the upcoming series.

My next con experience was with George at Madison Square Garden in New York City in June of 2003 at the International Comic and Sci-Fi Convention. I was there all three days and able to get some wonderful sketches from George including a Barry Allen, Firehawk, Star Sapphire, Sinestro, Guardian/Oan, Controller... all masterpieces.

George was also the auctioneer for a charity at the con. George is the Man!!

George was again at the Baltimore Comic Con in 2003 but even though George was not sketching (due to his hand injury while doing the cover to JLA/AVENGERS #3) he was signing up a storm, posing for photos and treating fans to all his wonderful stories.

In 2004 I was again at the Pittsburgh Comic-Con and even though George was still not sketching do to his hand injury, he always gave time to the fans by signing comics and posing for pictures. George even made a large contribution to one of the charities at the con... even though he wasn't sketching.

I went to Comic-Con International in San Diego for the first time in July and was pleasantly surprised to find George was there. I didn't see him scheduled to attend. He was a surprise guest! He was sketching to help raise money for A.C.T.O.R. I got a wonderful Cyborg sketch (see facing page). George also took time to go over to the DC booth where he did a great Captain America sketch on my AVENGERS ASSEMBLE Hardcover. Thank You George!

Well that's all of my meeting with George at conventions so far. Hopefully I will have the good fortune to meet George at many more and share with everyone the wonderful sketches and stories George tells to my PACESETTER co-fans. I can't do George enough justice on what kind of experience it is to meet him in face to face at a convention. If you've never had the good fortune to go to a convention and meet George, then it's something I highly recommend. It's worth the price of admission at any con to meet the legend!

Here's Eric's Cyborg sketch that he got from George at the San Diego Comic-Con International earlier this year.

ARTIST'S VIEWPOINT: X-MEN ANNUAL 1979

By J. A. Fludd

George and the Children of the Atom

In the late 1970s, the comic book that had me the most excited was THE X-MEN. It never replaced THE FANTASTIC FOUR as my favorite, but it did steal second place from THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN. I couldn't wait to see every new issue and take in what dazzling new character design, what spectacular new art, and what fascinating story was in store for me, courtesy of Chris Claremont, Dave Cockrum, John Byrne, and Terry Austin.

What I often found myself thinking was, What wouldn't I give to see THE X-MEN drawn by my favorite artist of all?

Since his debut on THE AVENGERS in 1975, I was hooked on George Pérez. As I had done with my first great favorite, Jack "King" Kirby himself, I'd taken up a minute and exhaustive study of George's work. With every new issue of a book he drew, after I was finished worshipping the excellence of it, I examined his use of details, gestures and body language, compositions, camera angles, special effects—everything. I made it my business to know George and his style inside and out.

And I really, really wanted to see him do the X-Men!

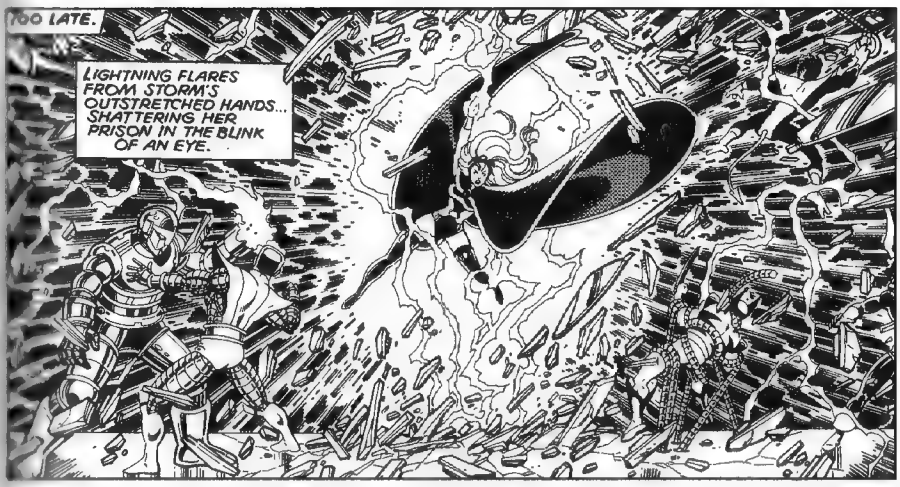
There had been tantalizing hints of what George's version of Marvel's merry mutants would be like. There was the cover of The X-Men #112, "Magneto Triumphant," in which Bob Layton inked George's depiction of the Master of Magnetism defeating Colossus, Storm, and Wolverine. Even more eye-popping was the cover of The X-Men #128, "The Action of the Tiger," by George with then regular X-Men inker Terry Austin. This cover gave us another George Colossus, plus Cyclops, Polaris, Nightcrawler, Storm, and my favorite X-member, the phenomenal Phoenix! This one just whetted my appetite even more. Sometime, somewhere, I had to see a full-length Pérez X-Men story.

In 1979, the same year as THE UNCANNY X-MEN #128 was released, I would get my wish. I waited anxiously 'til the fall of that year to see the first-ever X-Men Annual with orig[inal] material—a double-length story, drawn [by] George!

X-MEN ANNUAL #3, 1979, is a lesson [in] not judging a book by its cover. The cover, [by] early work of Frank Miller, is one of the wor[st] looking I've ever seen. But open up the boo[k] and what greets you is one of the most aw[e]somely crafted comics that will ever dazzle yo[ur] eyes.

The story, for the record, concerns Arko[n] the barbarian anti-hero from THE AVENG[E]ERS. The energy rings that light his planet [in] another dimension are losing power and Th[e] isn't available to juice them up again. So Ark[on] goes to Xavier's School to get Storm, provo[k]

THE UNCANNY X-MEN #128, from 19[79] inked by Terry Aust[in]



UNCANNY X-MEN ANNUAL #3, page 10, inked by Terry Austin.

ing her friends in the process.

Terry Austin was on hand for the inking and made the art for this story even more of a wonder. What you may not know is that one page of this Annual was actually inked by John Byrne, who had become a star drawing the regular X-Men book. If you have a good eye for art styles, examine each page of this book carefully and try to pick out the one page with a different line and texture quality. I'll tell you which page it is at the end of the article. Meanwhile, let's look at some samples of magnificence from the rest of "A Fire in the Sky" by Claremont, Pérez, and Austin.

First, check out the splash on page 2, with Arkon materializing out of one of his thunderbolts. Arcs of energy crackle all around as he stands with muscles rippling in billows of Pérez/Austin mist. Behind him (and the old Jewish couple with their newsstand) is some meticulously drawn Pérez architecture. And note what lies in the foreground: a newspaper with the headline "Avengers Save City." Look closely at the newsstand and you'll see they're selling the latest FANTASTIC FOUR, X-MEN, and HOWARD THE DUCK. This and the equally meticulous preceding page clue us in that we're in Pérez Land.

Pages 6 and 7 are one of George's trademark multi-panel double-page spreads, which he used to such magnificent effect in Avengers/JLA. This is an absolute stunner. The big panel running across both pages shows Cyclops coaching Colossus, Storm, Nightcrawler, and Wolverine in the Danger Room while the then-powerless Banshee observes from the overlooking control room. Colossus is all shiny, steely sinew as he squares off with a fire-blasting robot. Storm is all grace and majesty, as beautiful as she's ever been with her classic Cockrum cape flowing out around her. The composition and "camera angle" show George's excellent mastery of depth and perspective. The lower tier of panels gives us an impressive display of Colossus's physicality and power and Nightcrawler's agility. Outstanding!

Page 10, panel 1 (*above*): Storm cuts loose with her full power, her lightning blasting her free of the vertical fan trap—and blasting the rest of the danger room as well! The explosion of power and debris with Storm, her cape and hair billowing in the center, is George at his best.

Page 17: Storm is alone in the attic, which she has to herself and has filled with plants. George has drawn all of Storm's "little ones" in tender loving detail, of course. Arkon slips in through the skylight and tries to catch her by surprise. The surprise is on him as he gets his first taste of her power. George brings this to life with two tiers of tall panels that expertly convey the vertical space in Storm's quarters. Nice.

Page 19: Arkon comes flying out of the attic and lands in the swimming pool. Colos-

THE X-MEN ARE SIX TO YOUR ONE, ARKON-- LAY DOWN YOUR WEAPONS. THERE IS NO NEED FOR A FIGHT. WE CAN TALK!
ARKON ANSWERS TO NO ONE, LEAST OF ALL A WOMAN.
BE CAREFUL, MY FRIENDS. I ONLY PULLED MY PUNCH A LITTLE, YET THE STRANGER IS UNHURT. HE IS NO ORDINARY MAN.

X-MEN ANNUAL #3, page 22, inked by Terry Austin.

sus, in a pair of trunks that show off his perfectly muscled frame and the tuft of hair between his pecks (only George would think to include a detail like that), takes a punch from Arkon and retaliates, sending the barbarian flying again. The first panel is great; a long, thin, tall panel that gives us a downshot of the mansion and Arkon coming out of Storm's window and hurtling into the pool as Colossus watches. The last panel, with Colossus giving Arkon a left hook and Arkon's feet receding out of the foreground of the shot, is a wonder. Look at the perfection of Colossus's steel-coated musculature and the gesture of his body as he puts his full power into that punch. Superb!

Page 22, panel 2 (*above*): The X-Men charge on Arkon, who's getting up and drawing a lightning bolt from his quiver. Especially impressive are the amount of attention George has given the foliage in the extreme foreground, and another great shot of Storm in flight. It makes you sorry there's been so much redesigning of the characters in The X-Men. When drawn by a master like George, these characters in their classic form are exquisite.

Page 26, panel 1: This is without question one of the most breathtaking shots I've ever seen. Colossus hits Arkon with an entire tree! Look once again at what George does with Colossus' body. And look at how the tree cracks against Arkon's body and the splinters go flying. It is a moment of incredible power unleashed, caught in unbelievable detail. You can actually feel that tree trunk snapping against that barbarian. Just amazing!

Page 27 (*right*): Another splash, this one of Arkon materializing with Nightcrawler, Cyclops, Wolverine (who has his claws at Arkon's throat), and Colossus materializing on Arkon's world, in the palace. Look at the detail in which George has drawn the mist of teleportation, the architecture of the palace, all the people in it, and every individual warrior's armor. Spectacular!

Page 28: However, even more spectacular is this multi-panel, three-tiered double-page spread! The highlight of it is the single long panel that runs down the entire midsection and gives order to the entire layout. This is just unbelievable. The X-Men tear into Arkon's warriors, and you can see everything! Wolverine lunging and slicing through armors, a shield shattering under Cyclops's optic blast, Colossus flexing his steel sinews against his opponents, Nightcrawler "bamfing" out of the shot—and every detail of armor and weaponry. It's just one incredible explosion of action.

Page 34, panel 1: Cyclops, Wolverine, and Colossus face another wave of Arkon's hordes, more formidably armed than the last. Again the detail is exquisite. The architecture, the weaponry, and the armors of the men are captured so minutely, so perfectly, that you feel as if you're right there. Nothing has been left out. This kind of shot is what makes George the master.

UNCANNY X-MEN ANNUAL #3, page 27, inked by Terry Austin.

Page 37, panel 1 (*following page*): Colossus has hijacked a dragon and comes swooping by, grabbing Cyclops and Wolverine. It's a great combination of action and detail—and a great dragon!

Page 44, panels 6-8: As Storm reenergizes the planetary rings, the people of Arkon's world cheer at the restoration of their life-giving light. Look once again at the attention paid to the architecture and to making all the people in panels 6 and 8 individuals, with their own faces and wardrobe. With George, no panel is too small to do with meticulous perfection.

When I first heard that George was going to do the 1979 X-Men Annual, my imagination ran wild anticipating the things I was going to see. I imagined it might be a story with Magneto and Phoenix and that we'd get to see George cut loose drawing these characters and the immense powers at their command. I dared to imagine some titanic battle of the mutants rendered in George's awe-inspiring style. I wasn't expecting to see a story taking the X-Men out of their mutant milieu (in fact, at the time that this story takes place, the X-Men thought Phoenix had perished in the battle with Magneto in issue #113), and certainly the last thing I was expecting was a story about Arkon. But this extravaganza, which is not only George's only X-Men story but also the only story penciled by George and inked by Terry Austin, remains one of my favorite works of comic book art and one of the comics I most often use as a source of inspiration. It just can't be praised enough. And I'm pleased to say that my copy is signed by George and Terry themselves!

(And by the way, John Byrne inked page 37, the aforementioned "dragon page".)

No Pérez fan should be without X-Men Annual #3 in his collection. If you don't have it, hit the back-issue boxes, conventions, and the Internet till you find it, and feast your eyes on George's one foray into the world of the Marvel mutants at a time when they were at their very best.

COLOSSUS, YOU'RE A MARVEL! WHERE'D YOU FIND THIS PINT-SIZED DRAGON, ANYWAY?
A TROOP OF FLYING CAVALRY ATTACKED ME. I MERELY BORROWED THIS BEAST FROM THEIR COMMANDER.
SPANG
HEY-- WAIT FOR ME!

UNCANNY X-MEN ANNUAL #3, page 37, inked by Byrne

QUESTION OF THE ISSUE

What is it about George and his work that makes him popular as ever even after 30 years?

After thirty years in this business, George Pérez is undoubtedly one of the most popular artists in the industry. The reason for this in my not so humble opinion is his dedication to excellence in his work. Each and every mark rendered on a page is carefully, meticulously placed to complement the mood of the story. Mr. Pérez can match his pencils to humor, drama, horror, and any genre he is given. This is the mark of an artist who not only cares about his work but cares about the people viewing his work. He never lets his fans down.

Gary Beck

Detail, Detail, Detail. George's work is unparalleled in his fine detail in the comic book industry. George is the master of team book storytelling. He manages to fit so much in every panel and make the story flow. He is indeed a legend and has influenced generations of comic book fans and pros. George also has a wonderful reputation (first hand experience) at conventions as treating his fans great... always taking the time to sign, sketch, tell a good story or hand out advice to would-be comic book artists.

Eric Sellers

It's not because he is a great artist. (Though George is!) It's not because he has worked on many high profile projects. (Though George has!) It's not because he still works to improve his art (Even after thirty years, George does!)

It's because, at the end of the day... George is not only a very nice man and wonderful professional, but he is also a comic book fan! Look back through any interview with the man... for the most part (after he established himself), he takes jobs because they are things he wants to see. From the early days on AVENGERS, JLA, FANTASTIC FOUR, NEW TEEN TITANS, to later with WONDER WOMAN, CRIMSON PLAGUE and again AVENGERS, to now with his CrossGen work, JLA/Avengers and Titans Graphic Novel. His passion translates into his pictures.

George loves what he does. And we love that he is willing to share it with us!

Dave Marchand

George works very hard. And it shows. Not only in the quality and detail of his work, but also in his dedication to his fans. I'm sure I don't need to tell you that at every convention he attends he has an autograph line a mile long where he happily does sketches for the fans. He worked so hard on the JLA/AVENGERS #3 cover that he had to put his arm in a sling. He's excited about the characters he draws and about the comics themselves. He's done charity work for the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund and C.A.T.O.R. George cares. And if you have an artist that cares then you don't need to read this... just look at his art.

Patrick Murphy

To me the reason why George Pérez's work is still popular it is because of his attention to detail when drawing. Not only with characters or the amount of characters used, but his attention to the foreground, background, costumes, hair, eyes, and other things that most artists usually overlook when dealing with characters, no matter the amount of characters involved in the scene. Just looking at the cover to AVENGERS vol. 3 #1 or JLA/AVENGERS #3 shows how much he puts into his work. Placing the right inker and colorist on the job also brings out his artwork to give it that touch of greatness.

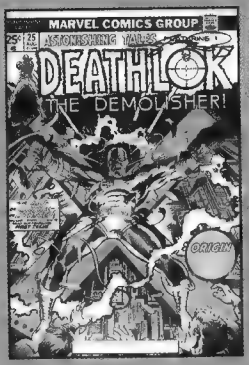
David Wiltfong

GEORGE PÉREZ CHECKLIST

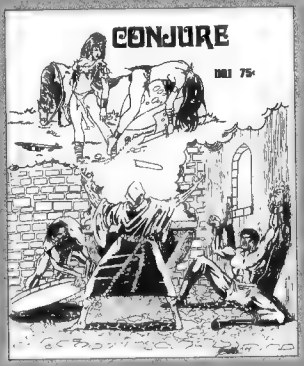
(CP=Cover Pencils • P=Pencils/Interior Pencils • IA=Interior Artist • II=Interior Inks • PL=Layouts • SC=Script)

With this issue's checklist, we're going to give you a timeline with some covers from over the years!

1974



Astonishing Tales 25 (P)
George's first work for Marvel

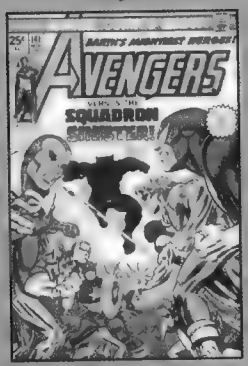


Conjure (W)(A)(CA)
Fanzine

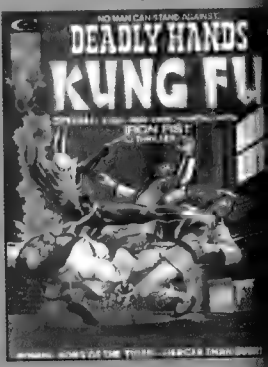
Hot Stuf #1 (P)
Fanzine

1975

Hot Shot Presents
She Devils (W)(P)(CA)



Avengers #141 (P)

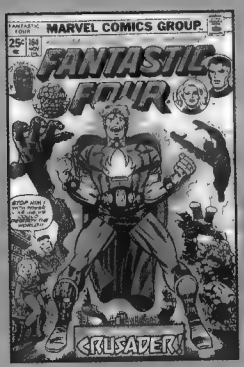


Deadly Hands of Kung
Fu #10 (P)

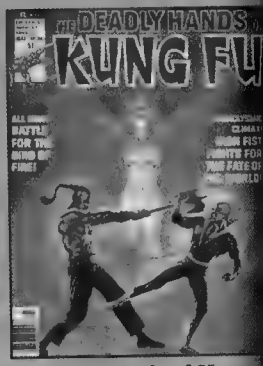
1976

MARVEL'S MIGHTIEST HEROES!
AVENGERS
AVENGERS ASSEMBLE!
AT LAST! THE FOUR AIN'T 2 AGAIN THE POWER OF KANG!
THE AVENGERS BREAK LOOSE!

Avengers #143 (P)

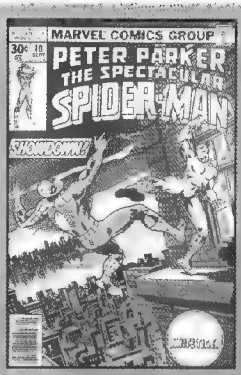


Fantastic Four #164 (P)



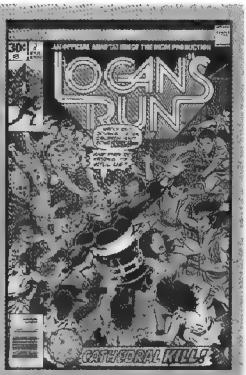
Deadly Hands of Kung
Fu #24 (P)

1977



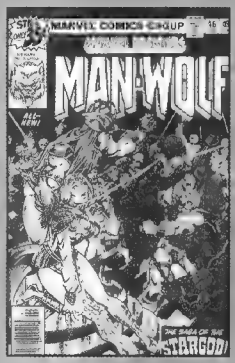
Peter Parker, the Spectacular Spider-Man #10 (CP)

The Invincible Iron Man #103 (CP)



Logan's Run #2 (CP)(P)

1978

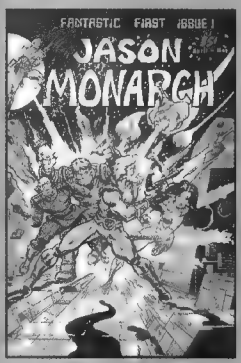


Marvel Premiere: Man-Wolf #45 (CP)(P)

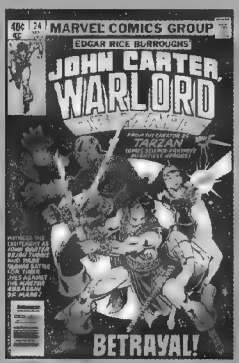
Oracle #1 (P) *Fanzine*

Super Villain Team Up #15 (CP)

1979



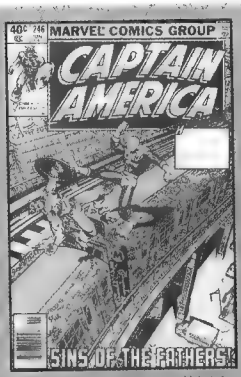
Jason Monarch #1 (P)



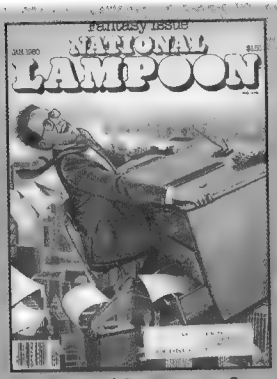
John Carter: Warlord of Mars #16 (CP)

Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band #1 (P)

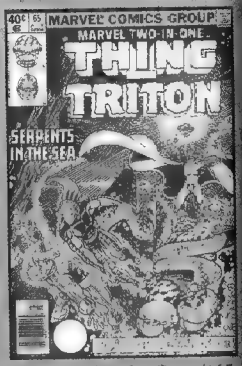
1980



Captain America #246 (CP)



National Lampoon v.2 #18 (IA)

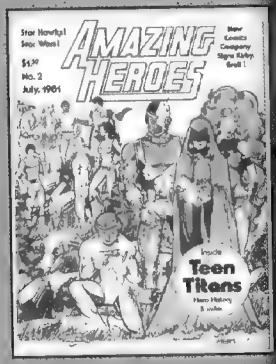


Marvel Two-in-One #65 (CP)(P)

1981

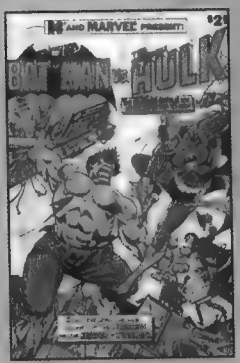
Bizarre Adventures #27 (P)

Pretty Girl Sketchbook #1 (P)

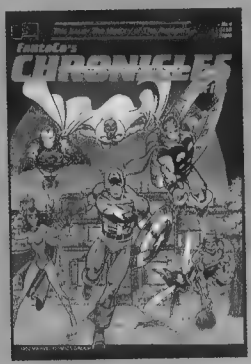


Amazing Heroes #2 (CA)

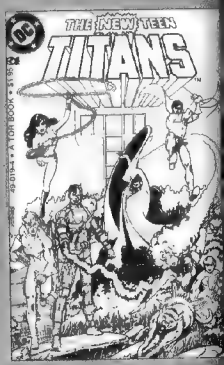
1982



DC Special Series #27: Batman vs. Hulk (P)



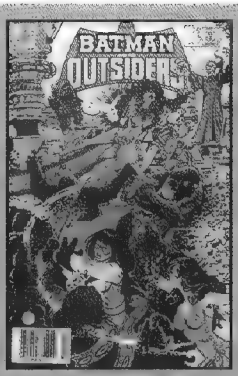
Fantaco's Chronicles Series #4 (CA)



The New Teen Titans (CA)(P) *paperback book*

1983

Americomics #1 (CA)

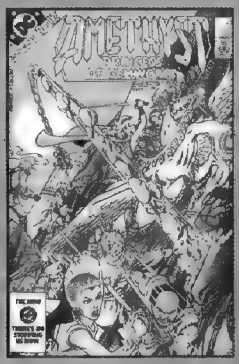


Batman and the Outsiders #5 (CP)
Inked by Jim Aparo

Action Comics #544 (IA)

1984

All-Star Squadron Annual #3 (P)

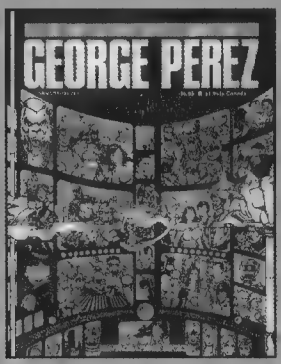


Amethyst, Princess of Gemworld #9 (CP)
Inked by Ernie Colón

Star Trek #2 (CA)

1985

Crisis on Infinite Earths #3 (CA)(P)



Focus on George Pérez (CA)(IA)

Who's Who #10 (IA)

1986

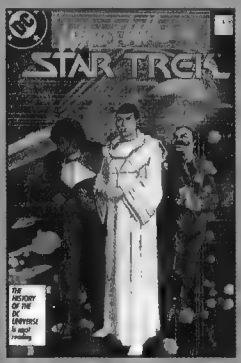
DC Heroes Role Playing Module: Fearsome Five "Fire and Ice" #215 (CA)

DC Comics Wall Calendar 1986 *Poster*

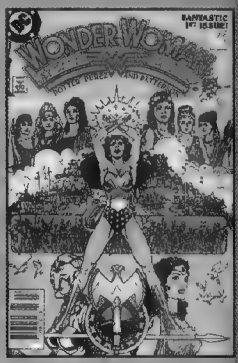
History of the DC Universe #1 (CA)(IA)

1987

Last of the Viking Heroes #2 (CI)



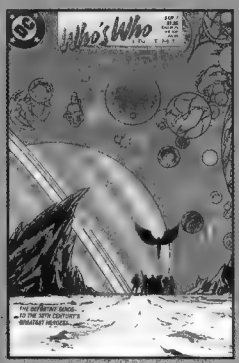
Who's Who in Star Trek #2 (IA)



Wonder Woman v.2 #1 (CA)(PL)(P)

1988

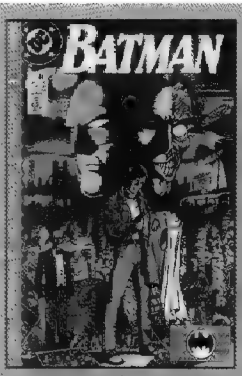
Teen Titans Spotlight #19 (CA)



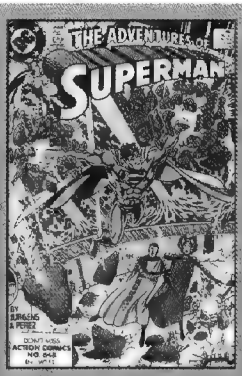
Who's Who in the Legion #3 (II)

Wonder Woman v.2 #18 (CA)(W)(P)

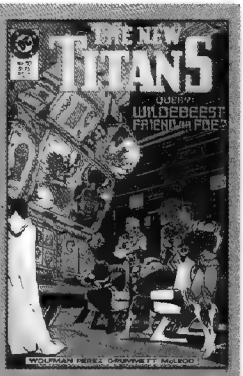
1989



Batman #441 (CA)



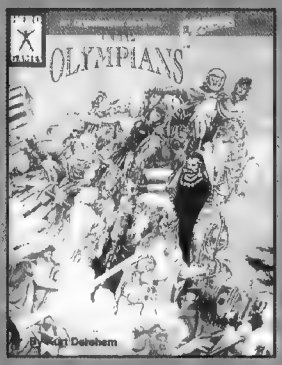
The Adventures of Superman #461 (II)



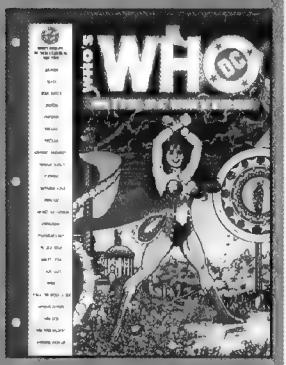
The New Titans #95 (CI)(PL)(P)

1990

Guardians of the Galaxy #7 (CI)



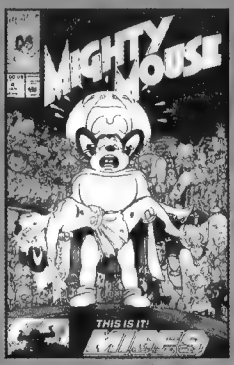
Champions: The Olympians (CA)



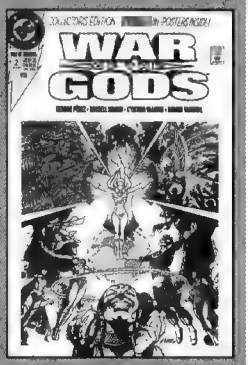
Who's Who Looseleaf #4 (CA)(IA)

1991

The Infinity Gauntlet #3 (CA)(P)

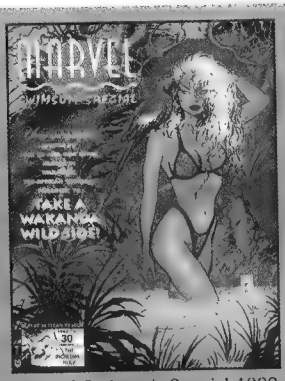


Mighty Mouse #4 (CA)



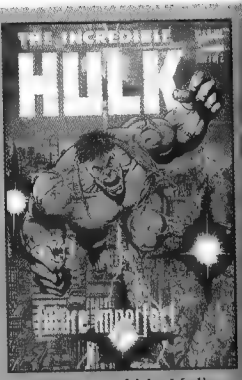
War of the Gods #2 (CA)(SC)(P)

1992



Marvel Swimsuit Special 1992 (IA)

Marvel Tales Featuring Spider-Man #261 (CA)

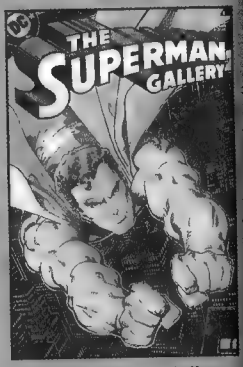


The Incredible Hulk: Future Imperfect #1 (CA)(IA)

1993

Showcase '93 #11 (CA)

The Greatest Battles of the Avengers (P)



The Superman Gallery (IA)

1994

Avengers Log #1 (CA)

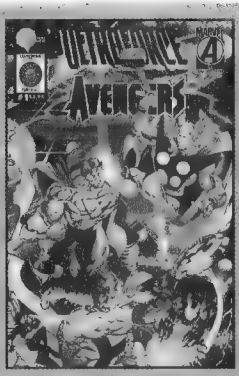
Sachs & Violens #3 (CA)(IA)

Sachs & Violens #4 (CA)(IA)

1995

Aster #0 (CA)

Batman Knight Gallery
(Design)



Ultraforce/Avengers #1
(CA)(P)

1996

Spider-Man Team-Up #4
(CA)(W)

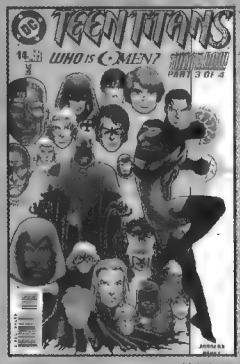
Spider-Man Team-Up #2
(SC)

Shi/Crimson Plague (A)
Poster

1997

Crimson Plague #1
(SC)(IA)

Spider-Man: Hobgoblin
Lives #3 (CI)



Teen Titans v. 2 #14
(CI)(II)

1998

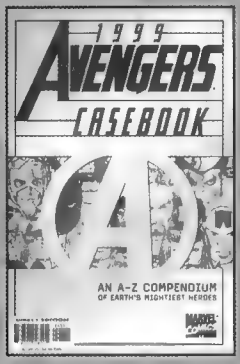
Avengers #9 (CA)(P)

Avengers #10 (CA)(P)

Crisis on Infinite Earths Hardcover (CP)(P)(II)

1999

X-51: The Machine Man #5 (CA)

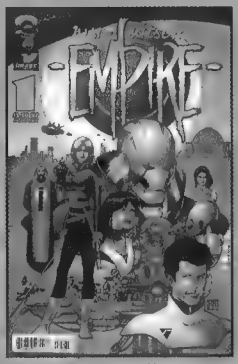


1999 Avengers Casebook (CA)

Avengers: Ultron Unleashed (CI)

2000

Avengers #32 (CA)(P)

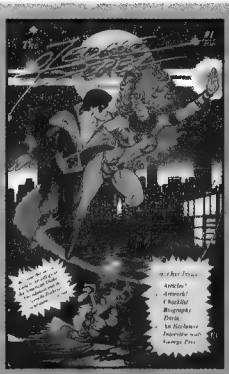


Empire #1 (IA) *Crimson Plague preview*

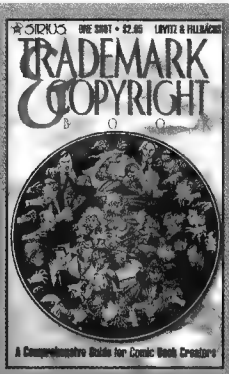
Wonder Woman: The Complete History (*Interview*)

2001

CrossGen Chronicles #3 (CP)(P)



The George Pérez Newsletter #1 (CA)(IA)
Fanzine with Interview

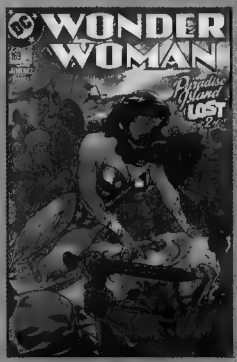


Trademark & Copyright Book (CA)

2002

History of the DC Universe (IA)
Trade-paperback

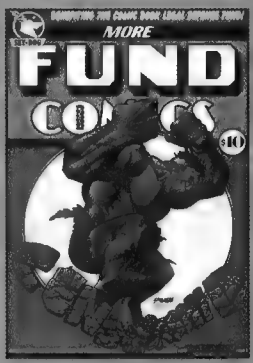
The George Pérez Newsletter #3 (CA)(IA)
Fanzine with Interview



Wonder Woman v.2 #169 (PL)(II)

2003

Modern Masters Volume II: George Pérez (CA)(IA)

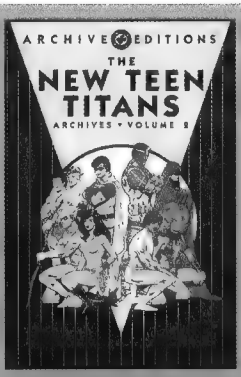


More Fund Comics #1 (CA)

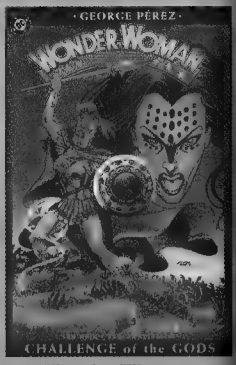
Solus #1 (CP)(P)

2004

JLA/Avengers
Hardcover Collection
(CA)(IA)



The New Teen Titans
Archives Volume 2
(CP)(IA)



Wonder Woman:
Challenge of the Gods
(CA)(PL)(SC)(IA)
Trade-paperback

2005

The New Titans:Games
(Ashcan) (CA)(P)(IA)

2005 will herald not only the long-awaited GAMES graphic novel, reunited George Pérez and Marv Wolfman, but also another mystery project involving George, Phil Jimenez, and Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez! In addition, the cover for Fallen Angel #19 features George's own characters Sachs & Violens.

Fallen Angel #19
(CA)

BONUS

Factors Unknown #3
(Back CA)(W)(IA)(P)(II)

From George:
"My first fanzine work was for a totally obscure fanzine called *Factors Unknown*. They'd print like 250 copies. It was published by a couple of guys named James Landon and Patrick O'Neill, who now does work for the *Journal*, for *Amazing Heroes*, as well as for *Marvel Age*." Cover by Neal Adams.

FAN'S VIEWPOINT: THE MARVELOUS 70s

By Tuson Sacks

The Difference Between the George Pérez of 2004 and the George Pérez of 1975

In 1975 George Pérez seemed to be everywhere at Marvel Comics. Not only was he illustrating Steve Englehart's AVENGERS, finally giving that series a regular penciller, but in that year he also worked on the FANTASTIC FOUR, the Man-Wolf series in CREATURES ON THE LOOSE, the Sons of the Tiger in DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU, the movie adaptation of *Logan's Run*, and Marvel's then-new INHUMANS book. Clearly two things were evident about Pérez: he must have been a very fast worker, and Marvel's editors had obviously decided that Pérez had the potential to be a breakout star.

Pérez drew the first four issues of Marvel's short lived 1975 INHUMANS series, returning to pencil/illustrate issue #7. His work on the series is rather rough—even at the time was clearly a new professional still finding his footing. He wasn't helped on the series by inappropriate inkers such as the rough Frank Chiaramonte and the legendary eraser Vince Colletta, but Pérez's work on this series has all the flash and magic of his later work. You can see it in the detailed vista of the Inhumans' city Attilan on page two of the first issue, and in the 17-panel (!) page 16 of the same issue. There's the classic "Pérez crackle" on pages 10 and 11 of issue 3, and a dramatic and complicated crowd scene at the end of issue 4. In these comics, Pérez was playing with the techniques that he will later master.

BUT-HOWEVER REMARKABLE THESE FIVE INHUMAN BEINGS MAY BE, NO LESS STRIKING IS THE AWESOME VIEW THEY SHARE--THE BRIGHT AND GLEAMING WONDER WHICH IS THEIR SPRAWLING CITY OF ATTILAN, THE GREAT REFUGE OF ALL INHUMANS...
A GOOD DAY TO BE ALIVE, IT IS FILLED WITH THE PROMISE OF PEACE.
EVERY DAY, GORGON, IS FILLED WITH--
DANGER, MY SOVEREIGN LIEGE--! THERE IS DANGER THIS DAY!
STALLIOR--!
GO ON--SPEAK, STALLIOR. BLACK BOLT'S EYES SHOW HIS CONCERN.
AS YOU KNOW, GREAT BLACK BOLT, YOU HAVE APPOINTED CENTARIUS AND MYSELF TO GUARD OVER THE CELL OF YOUR BROTHER MAXIMUS.
WE WOULD NOT HAVE LEFT THAT POST WITHOUT GOOD REASON--!
AND WHAT IS THAT REASON, STALLIOR?
QUICKLY--!
MAXIMUS HAS BEGUN TO RAVE AGAIN--ABOUT SOME "MASTER" AND THE COMING OF "DOOM." WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND HIS WORDS, SIRE--BUT THEY CAN ONLY MEAN DANGER FOR ALL WITHIN THE GREAT REFUGE.
DO YOU WISH TO SEE HIM...?
BLACK BOLT NODS...WITH A GREAT SADNESS WEIGHING HEAVY IN HIS EYES...
WHILE, DEEP BELOW THE ROYAL HOUSE OF ATTILAN...
LET ME OUT!
IT IS TIME--TIME, I TELL YOU--!!
MY MASTER HAS ORDERED IT THUS--!!
THE SOMNOTHERM MUST RISE!! THE KAPTOROPS MUST HATCH FROM THEIR GRAVES--!! THEY MUST!!

Inhumans #1, page 2, inked by Frank Chiaramonte.

Throughout the comics, we see hallmarks of Pérez's later style. He's a master at juxtaposing pure action scenes with quieter moments. In INHUMANS #4, for instance, we see a pitched battle between the Inhumans' leader Black Bolt and the Kree warrior Shatterstar. The battle lasts for most of the first half of the comic, and Pérez dazzles with a

terrific display of storytelling. He uses a terrific mixture of angles, close-ups and distance shots to give the sequence a very dramatic feel. When the battle ends, though, Pérez is also able to take the time and space to emphasize human emotions. The battle has a tragic end, and Pérez is able to convey the quiet emotion of a battle that has had negative effects. In some ways this one sequence reads as a precursor of perhaps Pérez's finest hallmark: not forgetting the characters when he draws a great action sequence.

One of the other things that Pérez has always done well is convey the differences between characters through body language and posture as well as by costumes. That's definitely clear in these comics as well. Black Bolt is the king of the Inhumans, and he always has a magisterial feel about him. Gorgon is a hothead and always seems to be consumed by his emotions. We can tell that relationships are very important to Medusa because she is almost always near another character, especially Black Bolt.

THE POWER LANCES UPWARD...
...WHERE IT ACTIVATES A SECOND STREAM OF FORCE...
...WHICH ACTIVATES A CEILING-MOUNTED MACHINE...
IT DESCENDS--TOWARD THE GENE CHAMBER--!
TRITON'S EXCITEMENT, PERHAPS, SPRINGS FROM THE LONG-AGO DAY WHEN HE STOOD...
...WHERE INHUMA NOW STANDS...
...IN A MONSTROUS GLASSITE BOOTH...
...FACING THE UNKNOWN...
AND YES, FACING FEAR AS WELL.
THEN OUR SOVEREIGN HAS DECIDED...
...TO GRANT INHUMA'S REQUEST.
THE SHINING NOZZLE HALTS ITS DESCENT...
...SPURTS BILLOWING MIST...
...AND ENGULFS A HIDEOUS WOMAN WITH... WHAT?
THE ANSWER TO HER DREAMS? OR MERELY MORE FEAR--?
I LIKE IT NOT. IT ESTABLISHES A PRECEDENT.
A DANGEROUS PRECEDENT.
THE CHAMBER IS FILLED NOW...
...BUT THE STREAM OF MIST DOES NOT ABATE.
BLACK BOLT--!
IS IT NOT ENOUGH NOW--?
SHE CANNOT BREATHE--!
SHE PANICS, MY LIEGE--
--STRUGGLES TO FREE HERSELF--!
AND FALLS SILENT, UNMOVING...
...AS SILENT AND UNMOVING AS BLACK BOLT...
...WHOSE VISAGE SEEMS TO BELY EMOTION, AND TO DISGUISE INTENT.
16

The 17-panel page 16 of Inhumans #1

Logan's Run

By the middle of 1976, George Pérez was beginning to iron out some of the early quirks of his art style and was emerging as one of Marvel's finest artists. With such able inkers as Pablo Marcos on AVENGERS, and the legendary Joe Sinnott on FANTASTIC FOUR, Pérez was able to improve quickly while being confident that his inkers would help smooth out any rough spots that came along.

Pérez had the same luxury with his 1976-77 adaptation of the science fiction film *Logan's Run*. In his five issues, Pérez was inked by Klaus Janson, a young inker on the rise whose sli[ck] and expressive style was a perfect complement to Pérez's pencils. Janson would later become well-known for his moody inks on Frank Miller on DAREDEVIL and John Romita Jr. on PUNISHER, but here, Janson's style is all about smoothing out Pérez's rough spots, emphasizing the kinetic force of Pérez's action scenes.

and emphasizing the characters in the story.

I recently re-watched this movie, and it's striking both how closely Pérez follows the film, and how he much adds to it. It's often said that the best comics storytelling is cinematic, but in this series, Pérez produces something more than cinematic. He adds extra camera angles to scenes, uses close-ups to emphasize a specific aspect of a scene, and uses panel layouts to elongate or shorten scenes. He adds to the movie by using all the tricks of comics to emphasize the movement and action of the story. Pérez's "camera" never sits still. It's always in motion in the way a movie camera can't be, emphasizing everything that's important in a scene while always keeping the reader grounded in the facts of the scene.

Look at the top tier of panels on page 10 of issue 3 for an example of Pérez at his best. In that sequence, Logan, the hero of the story, is under attack by a doctor in a laser surgery operating room. In the space of four panels, Pérez shifts his camera angle four times to emphasize the action. In the first panel we get a long establishing shot from the perspective of the lasers as they fire down on the operating table where the two men are fighting. In the second panel we see a view from slightly below the operating table as the doctor swings his club at a defensive Logan. In panel three we shift behind the doctor as a laser shoots him in the back, Logan's body a dark shape in the background. Finally in the final panel of the tier we see the doctor's face, panicked, as the lasers fire directly at him. By shifting the angle between each panel, Pérez emphasizes the action in each panel, eliminating any confusion a reader could possibly feel.

These five issues are full of sequences like that, in which Pérez's storytelling gifts shine from panel to panel. It's no surprise that Pérez was one of the most popular artists of the era. Not only could he draw good-looking people and complex backgrounds, he also was a master at storytelling and layouts. In Logan's Run, with the flattering inks of Klaus Janson, Pérez was able to show off all his skills.

Clearly there's a great difference between the George Pérez of 2004 and the George Pérez of 1975. He's gone from being a promising newcomer to being a master of the super-hero genre. But the genesis for his greatness was in place even with George Pérez's first work in comics.

Logan's Run #1

3 panels from Logan's Run #3, page 10

THE ROAD TO THE PACESETTER

By Ilke Hincer

Happy 30th Anniversary," I said as I approached the smiling man.

"Why, thank you!" he replied, his infectious exuberance spreading throughout the room.

But before I get ahead of myself, let me backtrack a bit, and relate for you the events leading up to my first encounter with the Pacesetter himself… George Pérez!

In early 2004, I was checking the website for the Canadian National Comic Book Expo, a convention held at the end of August each year in my hometown of Toronto. Yes, there have been some high profile guests over the years, but which star name do I come across for the 2004 guest list? Adam Hughes! Oh wait, Adam was great and all, but we'll save that article for when he gets a fanzine of his own! That's right, the inimitable George Pérez would be coming to town!

On the first day of the con, I arrived several hours early in order to buy a ticket. I'm glad I planned ahead, but others must have had a similar notion: there was already a line-up of several hundred people before me. As I slowly made my way to the front of the line, I let out a gasp as I saw a sign listing all the guests who had to cancel at the last minute. I scanned the list as fast as my eyes would allow, and while that hot actress who played the former demon on Buffy wasn't going to attend, I sighed with relief as George's name was absent.

I bought the ticket, but then found myself in a line-up for ticket holders. After an hour passed, this line finally started to move, and I eventually found myself going up the escalator to the vast dealer/exhibitor hall. I felt like the anxious relay runner who has just been handed the baton. I was ready to move tail and get to my destination: the autograph session with George. Just one problem: the autograph rooms were on the main floor, the level I just came from, and the escalators were only going up! Not back down! D'oh!

I managed to find an exit concealed behind some curtains, and rushed down the stairs. I eventually found myself… outside by a hot dog stand. I took a breath of fresh air (you can never have enough when attending a con), and plunged back inside the convention centre, with my ticket in hand, hoping there wouldn't be a long line-up for the autograph area.

Thankfully, I was still rather early for the signings, and there were only two people in line in front of me. As we waited, the line-up got bigger and bigger, and I could hear some people mumbling about finding themselves outside by the hot dog stand. These were my people! While we were waiting, a couple of volunteers walked up to us and the one in charge told us about some of the restrictions: we could only have five items signed, and while we could take pictures, we could only take pictures *of* the artist and not *with* the artist, in order to speed up the process. The guy in charge walked away to berate those in the Joe Quesada line, and the other volunteer (a cute girl with a perpetual smile) stayed behind. I asked her (he

she was cute) if she was George's 'handler', someone who takes care of any questions or concerns the guests might have, brings them water, leads them to their next event, etcetera, and she said yes. She also pointed out that this was her first time volunteering, that she didn't know much about George, and wondered if I could fill her in on some of the things he's done. Wow, I was thinking, knowing about comics was actually going to be useful when talking to a girl. So, sure enough, I regaled her with tales of George's artistic triumphs, pointed out that he was a writer too, and mentioned that she had nothing to worry about since George was widely known as one of the nicest people in comics. She seemed relieved as she made eye contact with a man who was walking up to the table set up for George. "Is that him?" she asked. I turned around, and smiled. Yeah. That's him."

Ilke's Geo-Force sketch from the 2004

After wishing George a happy anniversary for his 30th year in comics, and gushing that I was one of his biggest fans, I took out the comics I'd brought for him to sign. Peter David had already signed HULK: FUTURE IMPERFECT and SACHS & VIOLENS (all written by David and drawn by Pérez) for me a few years ago, so I had them as my five-book quota. But I had four issues of SACHS & VIOLENS and two issues of HULK, plus the SACHS & VIOLENS promo card... that was going to be seven items. Sure enough, I noticed the head volunteer, who had made the announcement about the restrictions, standing behind me. I looked back at George. "Could you sign them all?" I asked. "Of course," was his reply. "Whatever you brought, I'd be happy to sign." As George signed my last book, I took out my camera. "Can I get a picture of you?" I asked. "Sure... but why not get a picture together?" was George's response. He got up from his seat and said "Someone take a picture for this man." I handed the camera to the person standing the closest to us... which happened to be the head volunteer. I then stood next to George and smiled, certain that George's joy and boundless energy had not only rubbed off on me, but on the head volunteer and anyone else within a ten-mile radius. The flash went off, I thanked George and retrieved my comics and camera. The volunteer was indeed smiling as he gave the camera back to me. For a moment, I was worried that his joy was derived from not including me in the picture, but that was groundless. I think the picture turned out just fine.

It was a long road to meet the Pacesetter, but one well worth taking. Here's to George Pérez... not *one* of the nicest people in comics, as I had originally assumed. No... here's to THE nicest person in comics.

INTERVIEW WITH TOM SMITH

by Tony Lorenz - November 2004

TL: *Once again I'm honored to have Tom Smith involved with yet another issue of PACESETTER. I could almost change the name of the magazine to PACESETTER: THE GEORGE PÉREZ AND TOM SMITH MAGAZINE.*

TS: I like the sound of that. :)

TL: *Let's start off with why George is more popular than ever, even after being in the business for 30 years. George's art never seems to go out of style.*

TS: It all boils down to one thing. George is an artistic genius.

He still continues to amaze me to this day with the amount of hard work , sweat and pure love he puts into every panel of every amazing page he draws. His fans love for that too. You always get his best effort in every one of his comics..

TL: *What do you like most about George?*

TS: He is the most amazing friend someone can possibly have. He is the most thoughtful and generous person I have ever met. He is the kind of a guy who will give you the shirt off his back if you need it.

I'm proud and grateful to call him my friend.

TL: *Growing up what was the first work do you remember seeing by George; what did you think of it?*

TS: You're kidding right? I have always loved his art from his early days on White Tiger & Man Wolf to his early runs on Avengers & FF, JLA and Teen Titans. I was a major Pérez fan way before I ever met him.

TL: *I just bought the hardcover collection of the Avengers/JLA. I really like the over size format. It really made your coloring really stand*

5 panels from JLA/Avengers #4, page 3

out. Even on the art on the box case (the cover for Avengers/JLA #3). I don't know if it's because of the oversize format, but man! your coloring is nice. How many hours did it take you to do that piece of art (Avengers/JLA cover #3)?

TS: It took me about a week to color it. That's pretty fast considering all the color reference I needed to find to color it.

TL: *The cover you colored for the hardcover collection; was that done on the computer or was that hand painted? It is very nice.*

TS: Thanks. I digitally painted that cover from a scan of George's pencils.

TL: *Do you prefer coloring on the computer or doing it the old fashioned way? Why?*

TS: I used to say that I liked coloring pages by hand but now with all the cool things I can do with my computer and the ease for making fast corrections that I can make now, I would say coloring on computer is my preference now. Avengers /JLA would have been a nightmare to color all by hand.

TL: *You will be working on the graphic novel Teen Titans "Games". How is that coming along? What kind of challenges that you are having working on characters that you really never worked on before?*

TS: It's not. I have not even seen one page to color yet. Hopefully I'll see pages to work on by the end of the year.

TL: *Are you working on any other projects that we should be looking for?*

TS: Nope, I have not gotten any work from Marvel or DC in months now.

They seem to have forgotten about me and when I call them they never have any work for me. It sucks.

So I'm moving on to other things to supplement my income until someone gives me some more comic work.

I have just started my own Mural and Faux painting company "Artistic Illusions" here in NJ and I'm starting to get a load of jobs doing that. Imagine getting a Mural of your favorite comic cover or hero on your wall. How cool would that be? I can do it for you. Anyone in the New Jersey/Tri State area interested in contacting me about it e-mail me at tomscolor @aol.com for more info. I'm always open to coloring assignments from any comic publisher as well as coloring commissions from any one. Go to http://www.theartists choice.com/tsmith.htm to commission me.

TL: *Thanks again for your time and keep up the great work.*

TS: Thanks Tony

4 panels from the upcoming Titans:Games, inked by Al Vey.

FIRST ENCOUNTERS

by Tom Brevoort

The first time I encountered George was in the pages of FANTASTIC FOUR #177, the first of three sequential issues I purchased at the same time from the big five-for-a-buck old comics bin at Genovese drugs. A devoted DC reader, I'd eschewed Marvel comics as being awful, having been put off by the handful of Marvel books that had crossed my path up 'til then. But now, having become interested in the Human Torch through Feifer's GREAT COMIC BOOK HEROES and the STERANKO HISTORY OF COMICS, I was back to give them another try. And these comics, particularly the first two issues, were a lot of fun.

In addition to the FF themselves, I met Tigra, Thundra, the Impossible Man, the Frightful Four, the Brute (who was an alternate-Earth version of Reed Richards), the Texas Twister, the Osprey and Captain Ultra. There was a strong streak of humor running through those two issues, as the Frightful Four held the FF for ransom by the city of New York, and then-Mayor Beeme made entreaties to Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan for aid. I don't know that I really understood half of what was going on (the offhanded references to Alicia and Little Franklin were confusing, for one), but I certainly enjoyed the experience, lying on the living room floor, legs extended beneath the wooden coffee table, just me and the world inside those books. From that point on, I began to explore the Marvel line of comics, starting with the newest issue of FANTASTIC FOUR (#187) and branching out to the rest of the line all in turn.

The first time I encountered George in person was in a small comic shop somewhere in Long Island shortly after NEW TEEN TITANS had debuted. TITANS had spotty distribution in my neck of the woods--none of my regular comics

WHO IS IT, HAWKMAN? AND WHY ARE YOU LETTING THEM USE THE TUBE?
IT'S ONLY SET TO BRING UP JUSTICE LEAGUE MEMBERS!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, I JUST RE-SET THE PROGRAMMING. I DON'T THINK YOU'LL MIND.

New Teen Titans #4, page 14, inked by Romeo Tanghal.

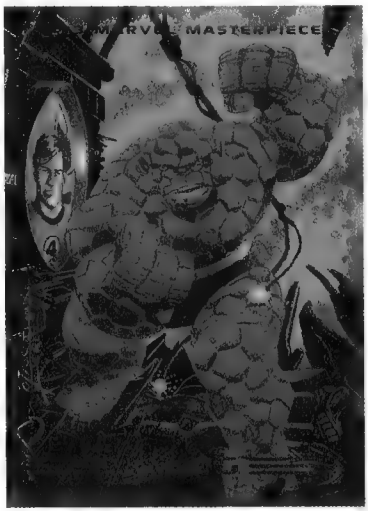
outlets would ever get copies during the period when I was shopping there (this was before there were any comic shops in my area that handled new books), but I wasn't terribly concerned. I hadn't really liked the Titans preview that had run in DC COMICS PRESENTS, and Titans wasn't really a strip that had all that great a pedigree to begin with. But my tune was changed with NEW TITANS #4, which guest-starred the Justice League and which I wanted to read so much that I persuaded a friend to buy it for me at his local candy story (a process I'd have to use to follow TITANS for months, until my family moved to another

RUNNY YOU SHOULD MENTION FIRE, WIZ.
OH MY-- MORE FUN!
FLAME ON!
YOU WANNA SEE FUN, GREENIE...
WATCH THIS! I CAUGHT MY OL' BUDDY JOHNNY STORM WITH HIS GUARD DOWN--
WHOOM!
--AN' SCATTERED 'IM LIKE A CHAD-MAN FLORIDA BALLOT!

Fantastic Four #177, page 3, inked by Joe Sinnott.

state). And two months later, I was in this small comic shop with George and Marv and Len. TITANS #6 had been released just that day, and I finished out my TITANS collection by purchasing the first issue for $5.00 from Glenn Hauman just seconds after he'd bought it for $4.00. I specifically remember George being gregarious as he, Marv and Len answered questions and such. He spoke enthusiastically about the upcoming issue #8, "A Day In The Life," as his favorite work to far. And the whole crew signed my newly-purchased TITANS #1.

The first time I encountered George professionally was when I was working on the Marvel



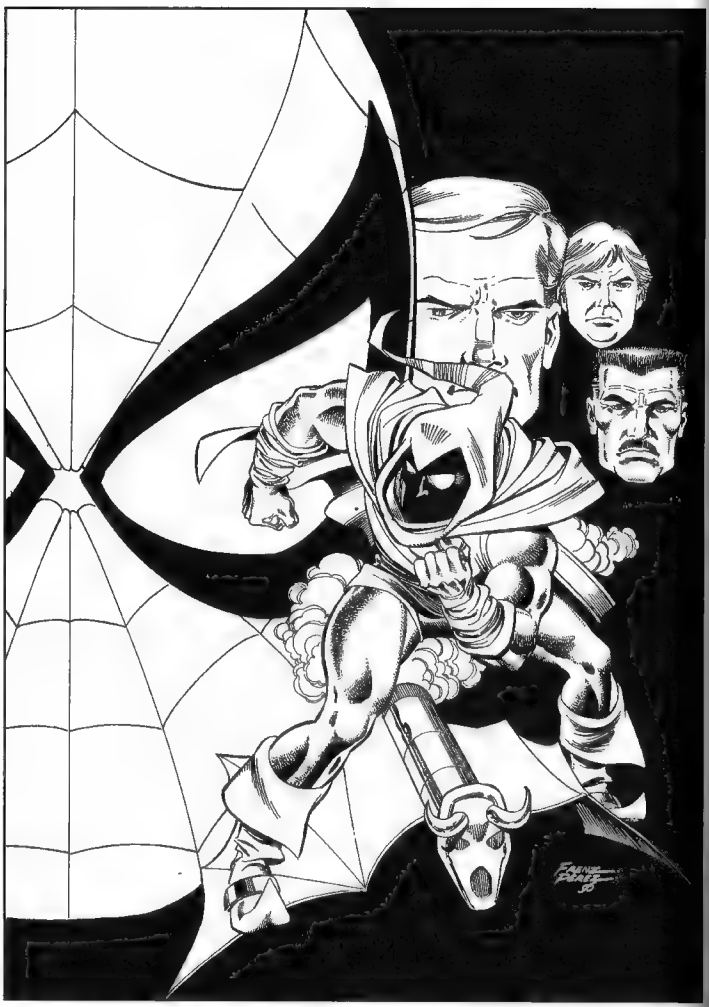
Beast and Thing trading cards from the early '90s

Trading Cards of the early '90s. George did a number of those cards for us, over the years. In this case, we were producing the second set of MARVEL MASTERPIECES painted cards, the first series having been painted entirely by Joe Jusko. Remembering the painted covers on a few issues of TITANS, Glenn Greenberg and I called George up to see if he'd be interested in contributing to the set—we'd both misremembered that George had done those pieces himself, rather than producing the underdrawing from which John Ticcuzi painted. Nevertheless, George agreed to do two cards, The Thing and The Beast. I remember quite clearly the sinking feeling when we opened the package to first behold the two paintings George had sent. Put simply, they weren't up to snuff. We were all fairly trepidatious when Bob Budiansky called George up to break this news to him. But George agreed with our assessment, said that he'd worked too quickly on those pieces as he was juggling a variety of assignments at the time, and agreed to redo them from scratch. The new paintings were fine, and appeared in the set.

The first time I encountered George diplomatically was when I called him up to see if he'd be interested in working on a short 10-page story that Stan Lee was writing for a SPIDER-MAN annual. At this point, I can't remember if we were calling George merely to ink or if we were trying to convince him to pencil it as well—George ended up inking Darick Robertson's pencils on the story in question—but I quite clearly recall the fact that Stan was very enthusiastic about the possibility of working with George, saying that he'd be delighted to collaborate with him any time. Every time Stan's done something for me since, he's asked if George would be available to draw it. "That guy is phenomenal!" This was just as the comic book boom of the '90s was going bust, and George's reputation as an artist who could produce regularly was at its most tarnished. But during this period, he did a number of things for Glenn and myself, including writing and doing the cover for SPIDER-MAN TEAM-UP #4 (the last pre-Heroes Reborn AVENG-

ERS story), inking the first issue of HOBGOBLIN LIVES over Ron Frenz (he'd intended to ink the whole limited series, but wound up overcommitted with his work inking the Dan Jurgens TEEN TITANS revival) and assorted pieces for things like SPIDER-MAN: THE JACKAL FILES.

The first time I encountered George specifically by his request was when Bob Harras told me that George had requested either myself or Ralph Macchio as the editor of the Heroes Return AVENGERS series, and that it made more sense to put it with me due to my long association with Kurt Busiek, whom George had requested as the writer. As a warm-up and as a favor, George agreed to pencil a chapter in the THUNDERBOLTS '97 Annual, the first actual George Pérez story pencils that would pass through my hands. A few months later, George gave me the original art to the cover of AVENGERS #4, originally intended as a cover for MARVEL VISION and not run there for arcane reasons. "Kurt already picked out a page that he wants, and I like to give my collaborators something. Plus, without you, this piece might not have ever been used!" Upon hearing that George was going to be penciling AVENGERS again, it didn't take Mike Carlin long to suggest we start thinking about reviving the aborted AVENGERS/JLA project, though that would have to wait a few more years.



Spider-Man: Hobgoblin Lives #2, penciled by Ron Frenz.

The first time I encountered George within the past year, he proudly told me that he'd earned thousands of dollars for charity doing sketches that convention weekend.

Here's to thirty more years of first encounters!

~ Tom Brevoort

WRITER'S VIEWPOINT: RESPECT

By Steve Englehart

From the early days...

George Pérez is often linked with me because he became the artist on THE AVENGERS when it was at what most people consider its highest point, but in point of fact, we only worked together for about six months. My respect for George naturally includes that time, but there are other components, as you'll see once you read on.

Here's the oft-told Avengers story, just in case:

When I was working at Marvel the first time, writers and artists were simply assigned to books. One might ask for a specific title, but Marvel might say, "There are three books coming up. Pick one." But once you were the writer on a title, you had little say over who the artist would be. As a matter of course, writers higher up the food chain got artists higher up the food chain, and those of us at a lower level got whomever was left over. I was doing the AVENGERS, which had trouble keeping a regular artist because you had to draw more people than in, say, CAPTAIN AMERICA, and one day they gave me George Perez (no accent in those days; except for people like me who spoke Spanish, accents were not part of American spelling). I don't think I met George in person then, but I naturally recognized his talent, just like everybody else. I especially noticed that he didn't mind drawing all those people (and all the cobblestones under their feet), and I noticed that he did

THAT BLAST-- LIKE A THOUSAND COLD NEEDLES! CAN'T-- HOLD UP--!
KILL 'IM!
ONLY IF AND AFTER YOU KILL ME, MISTER!
WH--? WHO--?
CAPTAIN AMERICA SOLDIER--
A
THANKS, CAP! THAT WAS ALL MY MANIC METABOLISM NEEDED TO RECOVER ITSELF!
YOU DON'T MIND IF I GIVE YOU A HAND, THOUGH, DO YOU?
--BE MY GUEST!
BOM!
POW!
WHOP!
I DON'T THINK THEY'RE AS LIBERAL AS YOU, BEAST!
LISTEN--
BAM!
CAN'T YOU EVER STAY OUT OF POLITICS, MAN?

Avengers #141, page 3, with inks by Vinnie Colletta

--THE HUMAN KILLER WHALE HAS VERY LITTLE BRAIN TO BLAST!
SUDDENLY ORKA REALIZES THAT THE BLACK PAIN WILL GET NO WORSE--
--AND FINDS NEW STRENGTH IN THAT THOUGHT!
ORKA WILL NOT FALL!
BY ASGARD'S GLEAMING GATES! MOONDRAGON IS DOWN!
'TIS MY MIS-FORTUNE, THOUGH, THAT SHE MUST RISE AGAIN--
--TO BEDEVIL ME FURTHER WITH HER DELUSIONS OF--
--SUPERIORITY--?
HO HO HO! A GODDESS, SHE SAID!
SHE'S AS PUNY AS HER FRIENDS!
STILL THY LAUGHTER, MONSTER! I'LL NOT SUFFER IT A MOMENT MORE!
THOU SHALT NOT LAUGH AGAIN!
KRAM!

A page from Avengers 149, written by Steve Englehart, inked by Sam Grainger

really nice faces, conveying the characterizations I was running—and I noticed that it all just looked like fun. Unfortunately, I left Marvel six months later, so George and I together had a very short run.

Here are two tales I haven't told before:

Six months before that AVENGERS run, some other comics guys and I were having a discussion about "good comics." Some held to the idea that some comics were just such bad concepts that they could never be made good, but I was equally certain that any concept could me made good if the creators just "put some energy into it."

"Why," I said, casting about for the lamest concept out there, "you could even make MAN-WOLF good." Not one month later, George Pérez took over MAN-WOLF and made it very good. That's when he proved himself to me.

And:

In the 1990s I wrote a book for my friend Richard Howell, PHANTOM OF FEAR CITY. The 12-issue run is one of my favorite writing jobs, and I've found over the years that people who read it see themselves as sort of a secret cult (read it yourself if you want to know why). The book's biggest problem was that it had four artists over its twelve issues. But it also had just one finisher for the covers, which, of course, gave every buyer their first look, and that finisher was George Pérez. I assume George did them as another friend to Richard, but maybe it just for the cash; either way, for a series that George had no other stake in, those are twelve nice covers that gave POFC a distinct panache. Once again, not as a collaborator but from a third-hand position, I benefited from George's professionalism.

So unlike my friends Marv Wolfman and Kurt Busiek, I haven't had the pleasure of working with George for any length of time, but just his being in the same industry has made my comics life better.

Phantom of Fear City #2, penciled by Matt Haley

UNFORGETTABLE

by Kurt Busiek

Building up to glory!

I first met George Pérez … well, to be honest, I don't know when I first met George.

It was doubtless at a convention, where George's booming laugh, his infectious good humor and his warmth make everyone around him instantly part of his circle of friends. I know we'd spoken a few times before we first worked together—on the first Thunderbolts annual, though I'm pretty sure we knew we'd be doing Avengers together when that happened—but I didn't know him well.

Except, of course, from the comics.

I don't really remember what the first George Pérez comic I saw was, either. When I started reading comics regularly, he was toiling away on series like DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU, and it took me a while to get to those—I started with the superheroes, and only slowly expanded out from there. So it might have been INHUMANS #1, or FANTASTIC FOUR #163, or AVENGERS #141. And it'd be nice to say I was an instant fan, but to be honest, it took me a while.

I liked his Fantastic Four work, I remember that. That was inked by Joe Sinnott, and it looked clean and crisp and energetic and powerful. But the other books—Vince Colletta inking Avengers, Chiaramonte and Kida on INHUMANS… it wasn't anything that brought out George's strengths, and I remember griping that this new guy on AVENGERS drew the Beast too small, and what's with all the tiny little panels, anyway? [To this day, I confess, I find George's "funny little monkey-man" at least a head too short, in comparison to the bulky, oversized guy I first met and got to be a fan of in the original run of X-Men.]

But I learned.

Part of it was George getting more experience with team books, part was me getting used to this new guy's approach, and part was just getting more appropriate inkers. I always liked his Sinnott-inked FF, even when I hadn't warmed to his AVENGERS yet, and it wasn't long before I was copying the way he drew Johnny Storm's forelock for my in-school superhero doodles, or adding those weird modular excitement-flares he drew around characters' heads when they were astonished. And as AVENGERS rolled on …

There was that weird energy-cage the Avengers got stuck in at the Brand Corporation. The cool energy-effects when Serpent-Crown-wearers telepathically contacted each other. The glint in Amphibion's eye. And by the time we got to the Grim Reaper putting the Avengers on trial, the introduction of Jocasta, Wonder Man's new safari-jacket outfit and more…

I'd started out thinking of it as Steve Englehart's book, and George was just the latest artist, but over time, in my mind, it had become George's book, working with a succession of writers—usually Jim Shooter or David Michelinie, but it didn't matter to me; the stories were good and George was there.

THERE ISN'T TIME!
C'MON HERO! YOU'RE A TRUE BLUE TRIER AND TRUE CARD-CARRYING SUPER-STAR!
YOU CAN DO IT! DO YOU HEAR ME, BUDDY
YOU CAN DO IT!
CAN DO. TOUCH
Fantastic Four 164, page 16, inked by Joe Sinnott.

And eventually, George wasn't there, and I wasn't as interested in Avengers for quite a while. But by then, I'd caught the tail end of his Deadly Hands run, lots more Fantastic Four, Logan's Run … and I'd follow George to the Firestorm series in FLASH, to JUSTICE

LEAGUE …

And then came Titans, and George became not just a star, but a superstar.

But for me, it was Avengers that had really made me a fan. Those tons of little panels had clicked—and shown a strength, too: If you're doing 8 and 9 panel pages as a regular thing, doing a half-page or third-of-a-page panel has real scope and impact, the kind that artists who draw three and four panel pages need to go to a full-pager or double-pager to do these days—and George had become the only guy (aside from a very brief run by Neal Adams) to challenge Big John Buscema as the definitive artist of the book. That plus the wild designs, the tons of detail, the personality, the energy… Avengers was the one, the place where George planted a flag and said, "This is mine, this is me, this is what you think of first when you think of this book." [But a momentary aside: It's still a crime that Marvel hasn't collected George's FF runs into books collections, either the freewheeling Roy Thomas run full of momentum and surprise, or the leaner, tighter Len Wein run, full of creepy atmosphere and great new villains. And the JLA run, too. Paul, Joe, you hear me?]

CHAPTER 1
7 TO DEFY A KOSMOS
"STILL DEMORALIZED BY THE EVENTS IN NEW YORK, I MADE MY WAY TO THE LAB..."
WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S HAPPENED?
IT'S JOSTEN, ZEMO -- IT'S GOLIATH!
WE'VE GOT A LOCK ON HIM AND WE'RE TRYING TO BRING HIM OVER! I'VE CREATED A DIMENSIONAL FLUX MATRIX, AND HE SHOULD CROSS INTO IT!
BUT SOMETHING'S -- SOMETHING'S RESISTING US!
IT DOESN'T MATTER. NOT AFTER --
WHAT?!
LOOK AT HIM! HE'S IN AGONY! AND WHOEVER'S HOLDING ONTO HIM -- THEY WON'T LET GO!
REALLY, IT'S NOT --
OH, MY GOD. THEY'RE HERE! CAN'T YOU FEEL IT? THE FORCES WHO TOOK HIM -- THEY'VE NOTICED US!
AND THEY'RE HERE!
Eh?

Thunderbolts Annual '97, inked by Karl Kesel.

• • •

So that was how I first got to know George—through the work.

At the time, I was in high school and later, college. By the time I broke in as a comics writer, George was setting new records with Marv Wolfman on NEW TEEN TITANS, and CRISIS was waiting in the wings. And somewhere along the way, I met George at a convention—it could have been any of dozens—but the work was still where I saw him most. And it was still breathtaking, imaginative, energetic… everything I'd come to love on AVENGERS, except that he kept getting better. A lot of artists, once they reach the top, figure that's it, they don't need to keep pushing… but George clearly wasn't one of them. Every new issue, every new series, he'd still be pushing to make it that much more exciting, that much more involving.

A story George has told before, and I'm sure it's come up in this magazine before—

maybe even elsewhere in this issue: George was drawing the first couple of issues of INFINITY GAUNTLET, and when the series came out, a young fan, fairly new to comics, came up to George at a con to get it autographed. Clearly impressed and wanting to offer the best compliment he could, the fan told George that the art was terrific. All that detail, all that energy, why, "You could be the next Todd McFarlane!"

A lot of artists I've met would be offended by that, by the thought that that they would be the "next" anybody who came along well after they did, but George got it. To every new reader, everyone's new. And just like he hooked me and countless others in the Seventies, here he was in the Nineties winning over someone who'd never heard of him before, never seen his work. That's why George keeps pushing. That's how he sees the job. No matter how often he's hit the top of the charts, he's still in competition with every other artist out there for our attention, our interest. And he's up for the competition—ready to win over the next generation with every new project, every new issue.

• • •

But enough about George. Let's talk about me some more.

Jump ahead to 1997. By this time, I'd been working as a professional comics writer for fifteen years. I'd been getting some nice attention with ASTRO CITY, UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN and THUNDERBOLTS. George was wrapping up a year as embellisher on the latest Titans series. Marvel had farmed out AVENGERS and three other books to Rob Liefeld and Jim Lee for a year, but they're coming home, and Marvel's lining up creative teams.

Me, I'd been lobbying for IRON MAN, and it looked like they were going to give it to me.

So imagine my shock when I get a call asking me if I wanted to write AVENGERS. With George Pérez doing the art.

It seems they offered the book to George to write and draw, and he decided that he was too out of touch with the last decade or so of Marvel history, so he'd need to work with someone who was up on the continuity—and his choices were me or Mark Waid.

Did I want to do it? AVENGERS is a series I've always considered the backbone series at Marvel, where all the threads of the universe come together. Other people might think SPIDER-MAN or FANTASTIC FOUR or even X-MEN, but for me it's always been AVENGERS, thanks to Roy and John and Steve and Jim and Dave... and to George.

So I was amazed and flattered that George knew who I was, and knew my work well enough to request me. And I'm very likely lucky that my name starts with a B, while Waid is way back there in the W's...

Did I want to do it? Oh hell yes.

• • •

So this is where I tell you all about how George and I became friends, and what it's like working hand-in-hand (whoops, makes it hard to type) with a living legend, right?

Well, no, not really.

The thing is, it's still mostly about the work.

George and I talked a few times on the phone, and we talked about what we wanted to do with the team and what we didn't (for instance, I wanted to leave the Vision and the Scarlet Witch alone for a while and focus on others, and George wanted to draw them, so you can see how that worked out!), and I wrote up some memos on who we saw the team as and what approach we'd take (you can see them in the Avengers Assemble hardcover, available wherever finer comics are sold), and there were some meetings we were brought in to New York for, and that was fun...

But mostly, I work in my home office here in the Pacific Northwest, and George works in his studio in Florida. So every now and then there'd be a phone call as I run something by George, or he has a question about a piece of the plot, or something like that, but for the most part, it was e-mail and faxes and FedEx that linked us. I'd talk to Tom Brevoort, the editor, about the story, and go off and plot it, George would get the plot and an insane stack of reference, and he'd draw it, and I'd dialogue it, and on to the next one. When we did get together, it'd be at some convention or other, where George's booming laugh, his infectious good

Pencils from Avengers #28, page 6

humor and his warmth make everyone around him instantly part of his circle of friends. And it's always fun sitting there, signing books for fans and swapping stories. And over time, I've gotten to know George better, and when my family and I have been in Florida, we've visited George and gotten to spend time with him and his charming wife Carol, and played the keep-our-small-children-away-from-all-the-breakable-stuff game that parents with kids play in homes that don't have children in 'em. And somewhere in those years we worked on the book, George went from being G*E*O*R*G*E P*E*R*E*Z, The Guy Who Drew All Those Stories I Loved As A Teenager to being just George Pérez, the storytelling genius on the other end of the phone, and I'll tell you, that's been fun.

But mostly, it's about the work.

And I'll tell you, that ain't hay. The experience of getting a FedEx package with the latest pages in them, or having my fax machine slowly spit out new pencil art, humming busily the whole time, was always a thrill. And I had two major reactions:

First, I learned why Marv Wolfman wrote Teen Titans with lots of small word balloons with short sentences in them—it's the only way to fit any words in, sometimes! All those panels, all that detail—even when there's room for text, you don't want to cover up any more of those backgrounds than you have to!

And second, I got to see my stories transformed. When they left my computer, e-mailed off to New York, they were just plots. I think they were good more often than not, solidly crafted stories that would have been fine if drawn by any good superhero artist. But once George was done with them, something had happened. George choreographs a scene like nobody else, deciding where to put the breathtaking establishing shot, where to go to staccato back-and-forth between characters, where to go tight on the action, where to pull back... there's something about a Perez page that's like nobody else's, and not just because if I plotted what I thought was a four-panel page, he'd draw eleven. There's an electricity to George's work that nobody's ever been able to duplicate, though many have tried—and it's that energy,

that compelling staging, so different from anything you see anywhere else, that is exactly what I associate with Avengers.

So my stories would leave my desk as stories, and they'd come back as Avengers stories. And there'd always be a certain sense of "I wrote that?" to the process.

And that never went away. On the first part, I got used to scripting over George's pencils, though it took a while before I got up to speed on it—and then, when we did JLA/Avengers together, after not having worked together in a little while, it took a while to get back into that mindset. But that just took practice. The other part, the reaction to the pages, the transformation the story went through, that never went away, not from the first page of Avengers #1 (which I own, a gift from George) to the last page of JLA/Avengers #4. I get the same experience you do—maybe better, since I know what I think is going to be on those pages, I have a conception of what it'll look like—and it's always trumped, always outdone by the reality.

• • •

A couple of anecdotes, and I'll wrap up:

First, as a measure of George's constant willingness to go the extra mile: When we did AVENGERS #10, with the Avengers Day parade, I threw in a couple of montage pages, one with all the past Avengers we hadn't already seen in the story, one with a cornucopia of Avengers villains. In order to give George some choice in what he drew, I listed about 85 past Avengers foes, with a note to George saying he didn't need to draw them all, this was just to give him a list to pick from, and just fill up the page however he liked.

Well, George drew them all (except for swapping out the Scarlet Centurion for Red Ronin, but hey, they were both red...). Not only that, I got a call from him to let me know that he'd thrown in a dozen more, because he thought Zodiac should be in there. That was a lesson: Never tell George Pérez, "You don't have to draw them all." A lesson I would learn all over again with JLA/Avengers, when I unthinkingly asked George which Leaguers and Avengers he'd particularly like to use. The instant response: "All of 'em."

[Al Vey even got into the act, at one point—in #22, George had drawn a double-page splash with about 150 Ultrons on it, and I was under strict instructions not to cover any of them up with copy. Al made that job just a little bit harder by adding three or four more, just to see if George would notice.]

Second, as a measure of George's dedication: That issue with the montages? #10? Most of it was drawn in a hospital bed. Not the montages, since the reference involved was too much to deal with, but the bulk of the rest of the issue, George was in the hospital due to complications from diabetes. That he did it at all was astounding. That it was still compelling, exciting and full of power, energy and momentum... well, that's George.

• • •

So how well do I know George? Not as well as I'd like to. You don't work with someone—even someone 3000-plus miles away—without getting to know them somewhat, though, and I'm happy to count George as a friend as well as a colleague. As a person, even through phone calls, conventions, the occasional visit—and one memorable rafting trip on the Rogue River, early in our collaboration—George is a hell of a guy, gregarious, welcoming, good-humored and charming.

As a storyteller, George is a phenomenon, drawing everything from superheroes to mythology to science fiction to fantasy and more with majesty, grace, and an innovative approach to the page that's never been matched. I'm often asked if, after JLA/Avengers, George and I will be doing another project together—and the answer is, I sure hope so.

Because even if I'm hazy on the beginnings—I'm not sure when I first met George, and I'm not even sure where I first saw his work—the rest of it is all unforgettable. If we never do another page together, knowing and working with George has been a rare privilege. If we do... well, I know what I'll be doing, each time the pages come in.

I'll be thinking, "How the hell does he do that?!"

Just like always.

Avengers/JLA #4, page 27

ARTIST'S VIEWPOINT: INKING PÉREZ

by Jerry Ordway

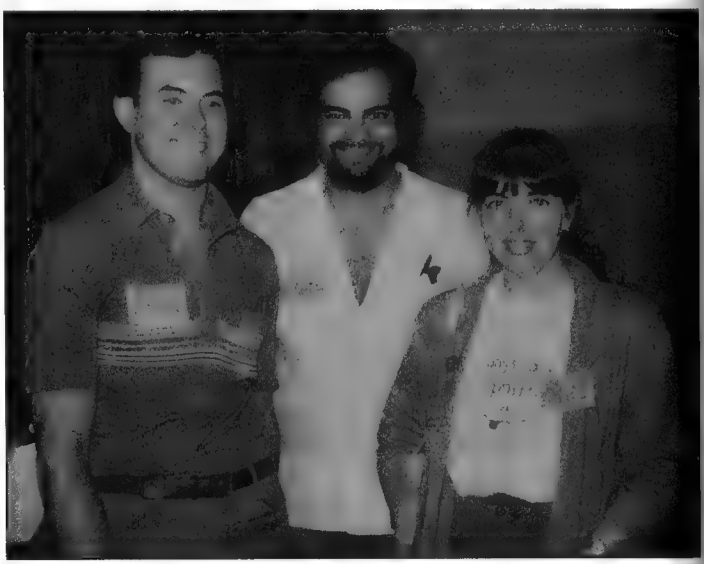
"Making them look good, like a good make-up artist does to a star!"

Hi. My name is Jerry Ordway, and I've been very fortunate to have worked with many many fine comic folks over my twenty plus years in the business. George Pérez was one of those folks. I first got the chance to ink his pencils on CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS, in the 1980s. I worked with George as well during my seven years on the Superman titles as a fellow artist/writer, and shared some fun dinners as well during our many story conferences. In the 1990s I inked a handful of covers for Malibu's Ultraverse, over George. I even got to write and draw a three issue Avengers arc, spelling George and Kurt Busiek from the book while they prepared their terrific Ultron storyline.

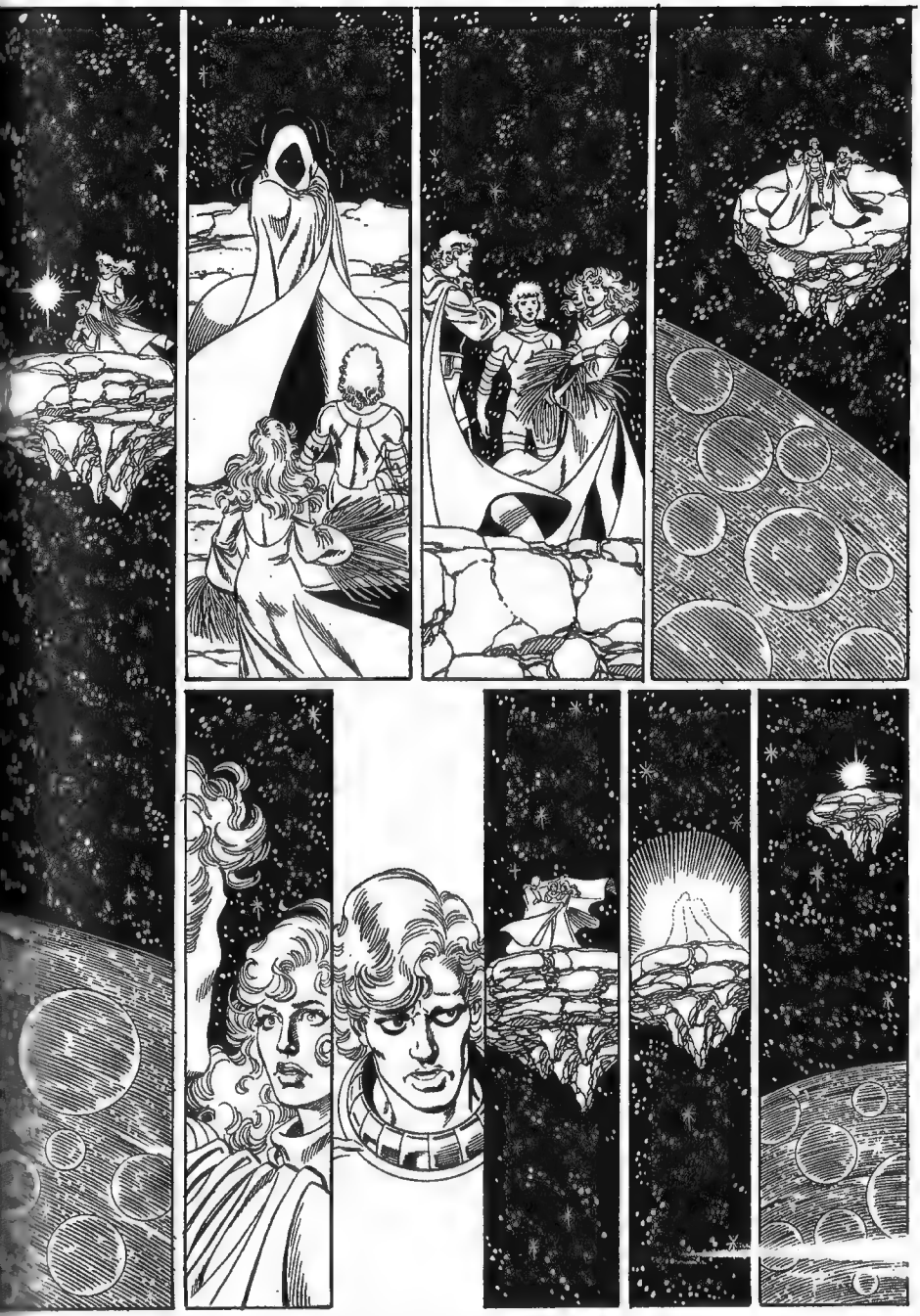
George is at heart, a fan of comics, and his enthusiasm is always contagious. I couldn't believe the crowds of costumed characters he weaved effortlessly through CRISIS. I couldn't believe I inked them either. As anyone who ever inked George knows, it's hard work. He uses no short-cuts. Every panel has tons of content, which furthers the story. Sure it's tedious to ink all that, but it's all information, not "busy work." It all exists to enhance the comic readers enjoyment, and better the story. I always respected that, even as I cursed the tiny panels full of rubble that I was rendering in ink.

Ever the fan, Mr. Pérez has had me draw a page, which he then inked, just for the fun of it. He did this in CRISIS, where he supplied me with a stick figure layout for a page I pencilled which he inked. Years later he did it again—a purely fan moment, in AVENGERS. I inked a page in the issue preceeding mine, and he inked the last page of my storyline that lead directly into his next issue. That's one reason I suppose for the amazing loyalty the comic readers have shown him over his long career. He gives them good bang for their buck.

The year I inked CRISIS, 1985 I believe, I had also inked John Byrne on FANTASTIC FOUR. I had just come off drawing ALL STAR SQUADRON and INFINITY INC., and was kind of looking for a temporary break from pencilling. Working over those two guys was a tremendous learning experience for me, and also the first instance of inking artists with a strong fan base. I learned to enhance, not overpower the pencillers. My job was to make them look good, like a good



Jerry, George and Carol at the Kirby Awards, 1986



Crisis on Infinite Earths #7, page 1. Inks by Jerry Ordway.

Winners for the 1986 Kirby Awards pose with the man himself! (Clockwise from top left) George Pérez, John Totelben, Dave Gibbons, Steve Rude, Frank Miller, Karen Berger, Jerry Ordway, and Jack Kirby. Photo by Carol Flynn.

make-up artist does to a star or starlet, but to keep them looking like themselves. As my reward, I shared a few inking awards for that year, chief among them the "Jack Kirby Award" presented in San Diego, in 1986.

I have fond memories of sitting in Roger Stern's New York City hotel room with George, Mike Carlin and Dennis Janke, discussing and planning for George's debut in ACTION COMICS. Roger was writing the Superman title, and I was writing and drawing ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN at the time, and we were cooking up the storyline which involved Mongul and Superman battling as a gladiator. (That storyline later wound up as an episode of the Justice League cartoon.) George was always a great plotter, and fit right into the Superman team.

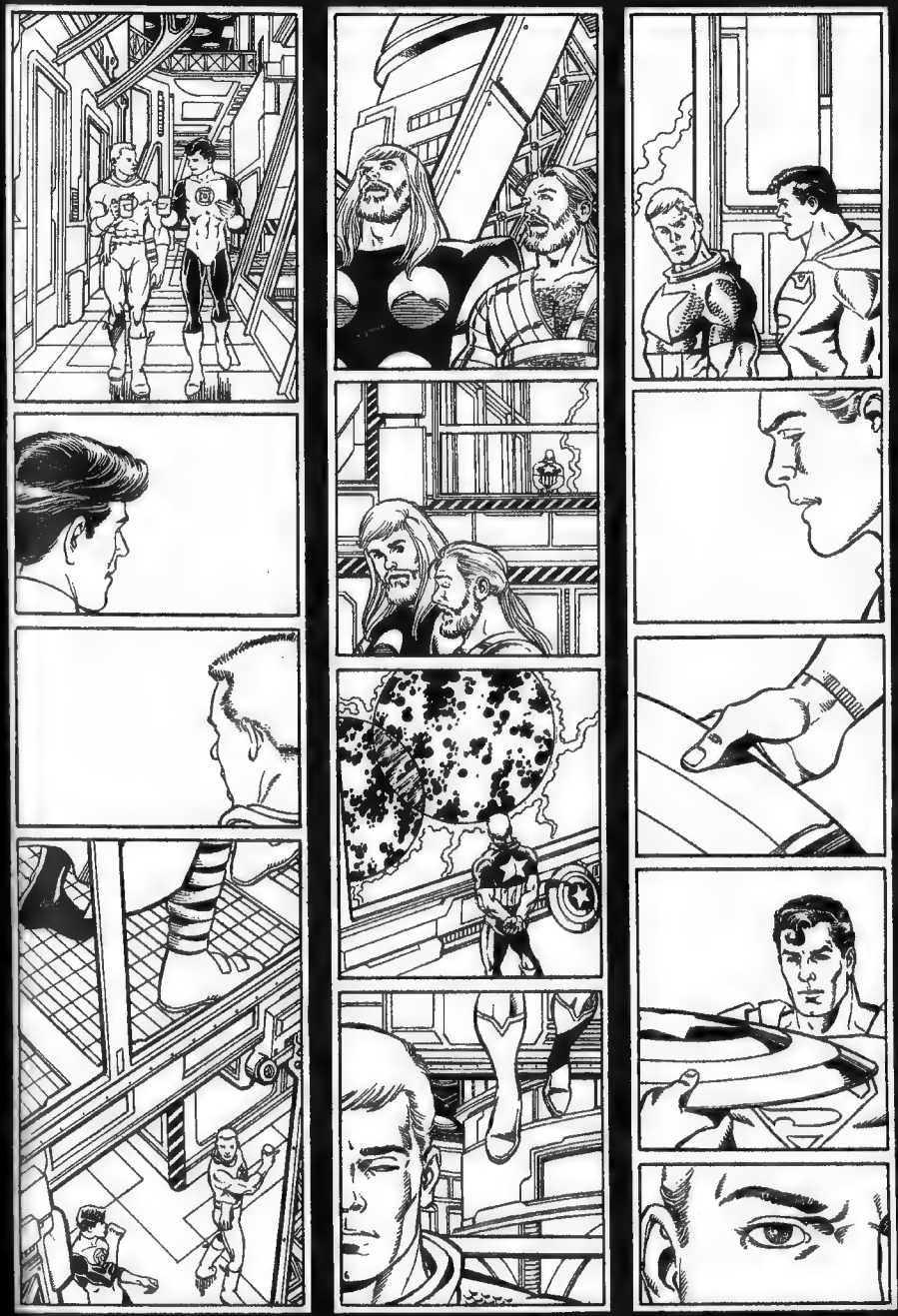
In closing, let me tell you about what could have been our first collaboration. I had just started doing some inking work for DC comics in the summer of 1980, while still holding down a full time job at a commercial art studio. I wasn't really interested in doing comics full time as I was an apprentice illustrator at this studio, a job I really loved. Anyway, I got a call one day asking if I was interested in inking the new title TEEN TITANS, over George. This had to be around the time issue 4 or 5 had been out. I turned it down, because I had a good job, and also because I didn't want to be just an inker in comics. Well, in the space of 2 months, I found myself losing interest at the studio, and then got another offer to be part of a new start-up comic for DC, ALL STAR SQUADRON, and wound up accepting. Looking back, I do think I made the right move for my career. On All Star, I moved up to pencilling when the pencillers left. On Titans, George stayed forever! Just kidding, but as fun as it would've been, I would certainly have been pigeonholed as an inker.

~ Jerry Ordway, August 2004

And now, what is often considered everyone's favorite feature of PACESETTER, we have the George Pérez Art Gallery. Culled from the years, published and unpublished, sketch and rendered drawing... it's all here for your enjoyment!

This awesome image of She-Hulk is courtesy of Rich D'Allesandro!

The pencils from Avengers #24, page 14



Avengers/JLA line art from issue #4, page 11

2003 convention sketch of Barry Allen, the Flash.

This picture of Cap was rendered in white against a black background for Eric Sellers earlier this year.

This awesome commission piece was drawn in 2001.

Here is one of the sketches from Eric Sellers' collection.

Did you know...
CRIMSON PLAGUE was not George's first creator-owned project. It was SACHS AND VIOLENS, co-created with Peter David.

Gabriel the Airwalker, a Herald of Galactus.

Terrax the Tamer, another Herald of Galactus.

Rich D'Allesandro provided these two commission sketches, from 2002.

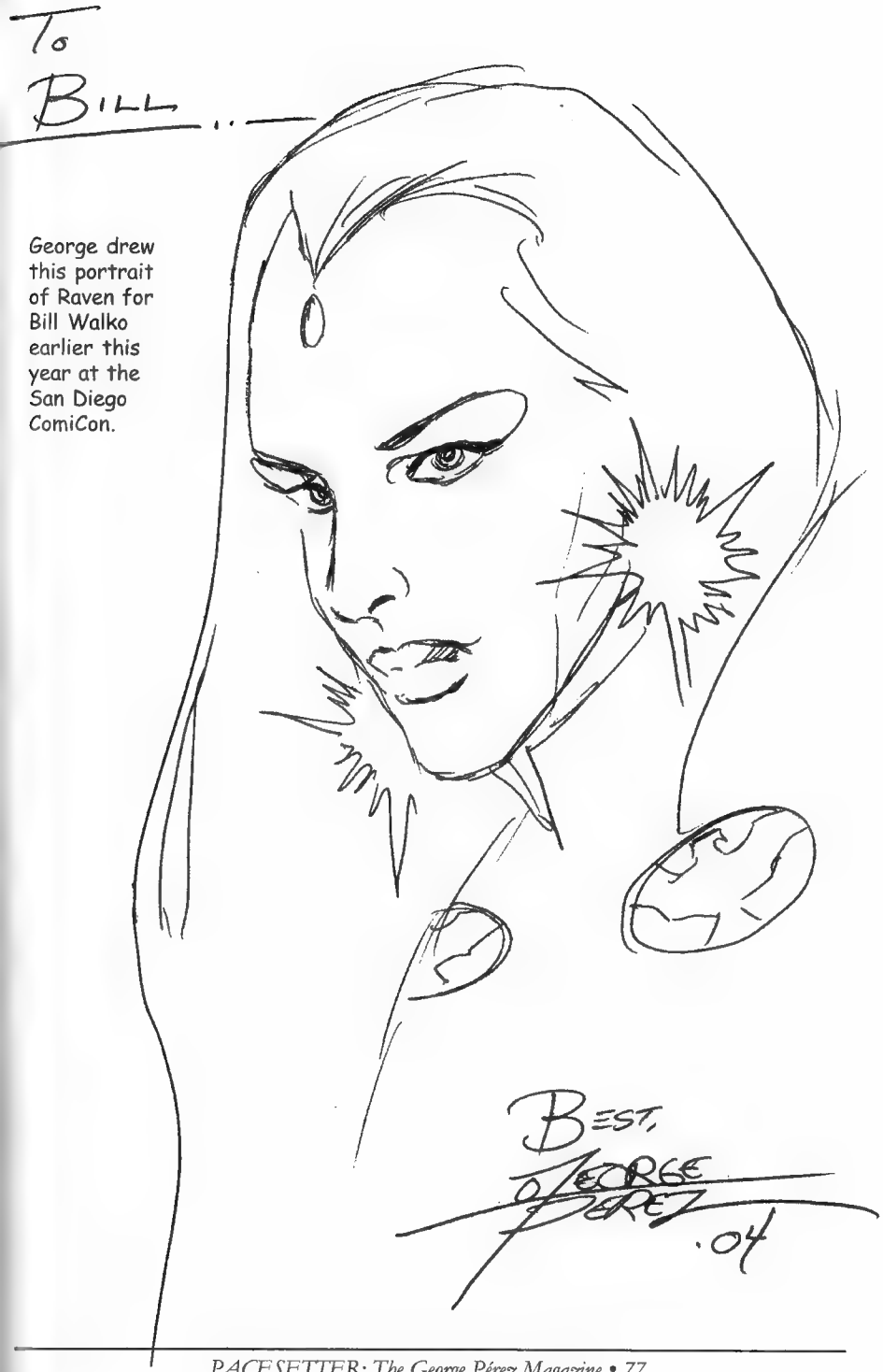
Killer Frost
Convention sketch from 2003

Cover to DC/Marvel All-Access #3, penciled by Patrick Oliffe and inked by Pérez.

--AND WITH ACUTE IMPACT.!
KLUD!
MY MEN DID NOT LIE-- THE ANIMAL IS INDEED A PECULIAR HYBRID... QUITE POSSIBLY A SPY!
I WILL EXECUTE IT QUICKLY AND GET BACK TO THE PROJECT.
CONSCIOUNESS SCREAMS INTO OBLIVION, THEN ECHOES BACK IN TONES OF LIVID AGONY--
--TINGED WITH EBON FURY THAT REVIVES SINEWY CONTROL AND STIRS LYCANTHROPIC BLOOD...
...IMBUING THE NOW-MURDEROUS MAN-WOLF--
--WITH A RABID BATTLE-LUST THAT IS MET DECISIVELY--
BITHOM!
--BY CRUEL WEAPONRY!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

Creatures on the Loose #35, page 11.



George drew this portrait of Raven for Bill Walko earlier this year at the San Diego ComiCon.

DC Comics, Inc.
STORY PAGE #: 12
BOOK: Crisis on Infinite Earths
ISSUE/MONTH: 9/Greenlawn
WELL, WELL, WELL--THIS IS A PLEASURE. THE NAME'S LEX LUTHOR.
THE CULMINATION OF EVERYTHING I'VE EVER WORKED FOR IS AT HAND!
BUT THIS ONE REEKS OF EVIL...
AS MY COMPUTERIZED COMPATRIOT HAS STATED, OUR FORCES ARE NOW IN CONTROL OF THREE EARTHS.
MY GOD--TO BE SO SIMILAR--AND YET SO DIFFERENT.
...OR WE WILL UNLEASH FORCES WHICH WILL DESTROY THE THREE EARTHS UNDER OUR CONTROL.
AND, BEING LINKED AS YOU ARE, YOUR TWO WORLDS WILL BE DESTROYED AS WELL.
LUTHOR? HE ALMOST LOOKS LIKE MY FATHER...I FEEL THE SAME AURA ABOUT HIM--
BUT WE BELIEVE FIVE IS A FAR BETTER NUMBER; THEREFORE WE DEMAND THAT YOUR NATIONS' SURRENDER...
FOR YEARS YOU PERSECUTED US BECAUSE WE UPSET YOUR VIEWS OF CONFORMITY.
BUT GUESS WHOSE FEET WEAR THOSE PROVERBIAL SHOES NOW?
SO MAKE YOUR DECISION, MY FRIENDS.
YOU HAVE, OH--FIFTEEN MINUTES. LONG ENOUGH TO DECIDE BETWEEN LIFE AND COMPLETE ANNIHILATION!
AS THE HOLOGRAPHIC IMAGE FADES, SEVERAL FIGURES DART FROM THE U.N. CHAMBER WITH DETERMINED SPEED...
ONE IS CLARK KENT.
OSTENSIBLY, HE IS A REPORTER FOR A GREAT METROPOLITAN NEWSPAPER, THE DAILY PLANET...
BUT, HE IS ALSO SOMETHING MORE...
BENEATH HIS SOFT MILD-MANNERED FACADE HE IS A MAN OF STEEL.
KARA DIED TRYING TO SAVE THE EARTHS.
I'LL NOT LET HER SACRIFICE BE IN VAIN.
THIS IS A JOB FOR SUPERMAN!
DO NOT OVERLAP AT CENTER!

Another Crisis page provided by Jerry Ordway, from issue #9, page 12.

CrossGen Chronicles #2, page 8, inked by Dennis Jensen.

Here we have the pencils for CrossGen Chronicles #2, page 25.

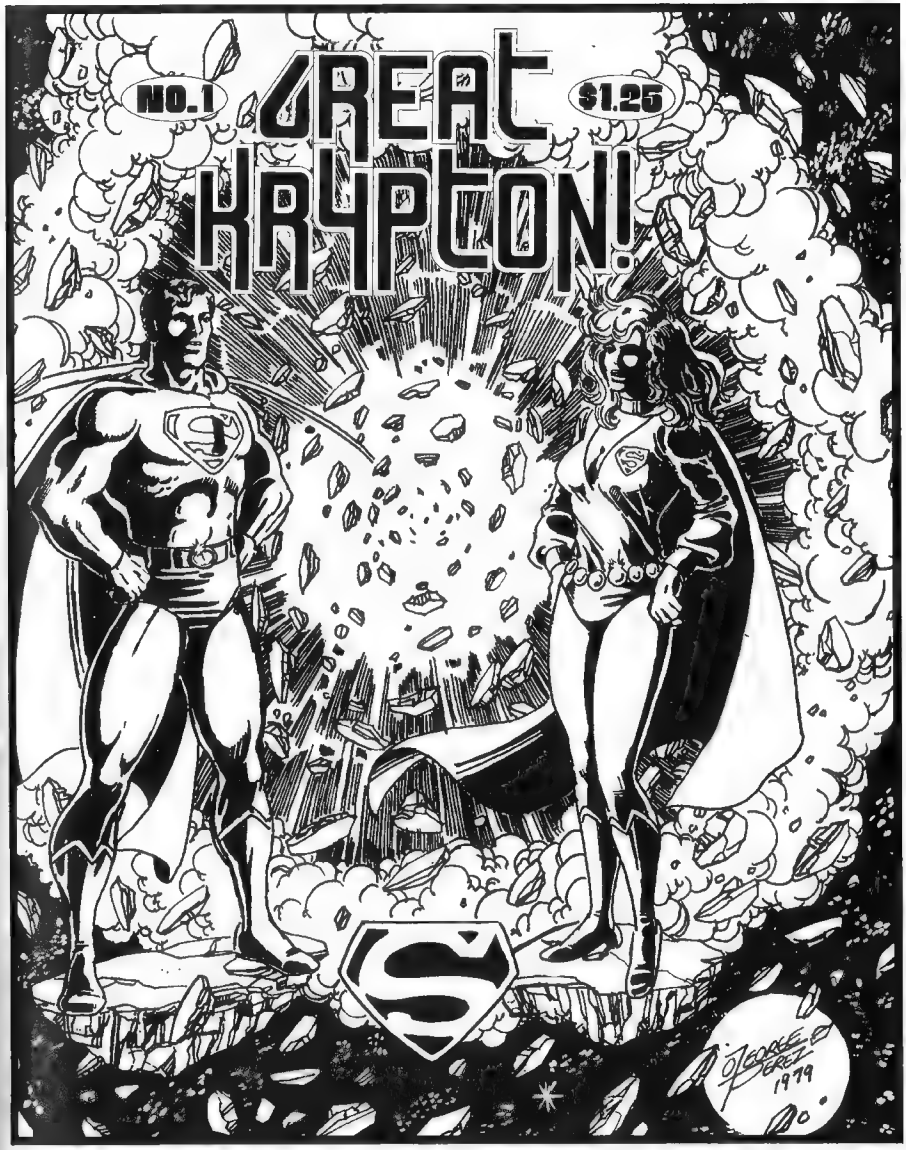
Dr. Doom, the Hero - Marvel Metal #128 from 1995.
This is the pencil art for the Dr. Doom trading card from Marvel Comics.

This lovely promotional art was used for DreamSmith Studios in '97.

Firehawk
Convenction sketch from '03.

This page from Avengers #18, page 22, was penciled by Ordway and inked by Pérez.

Cover for the fanzine Great Krypton #1, from 1979.

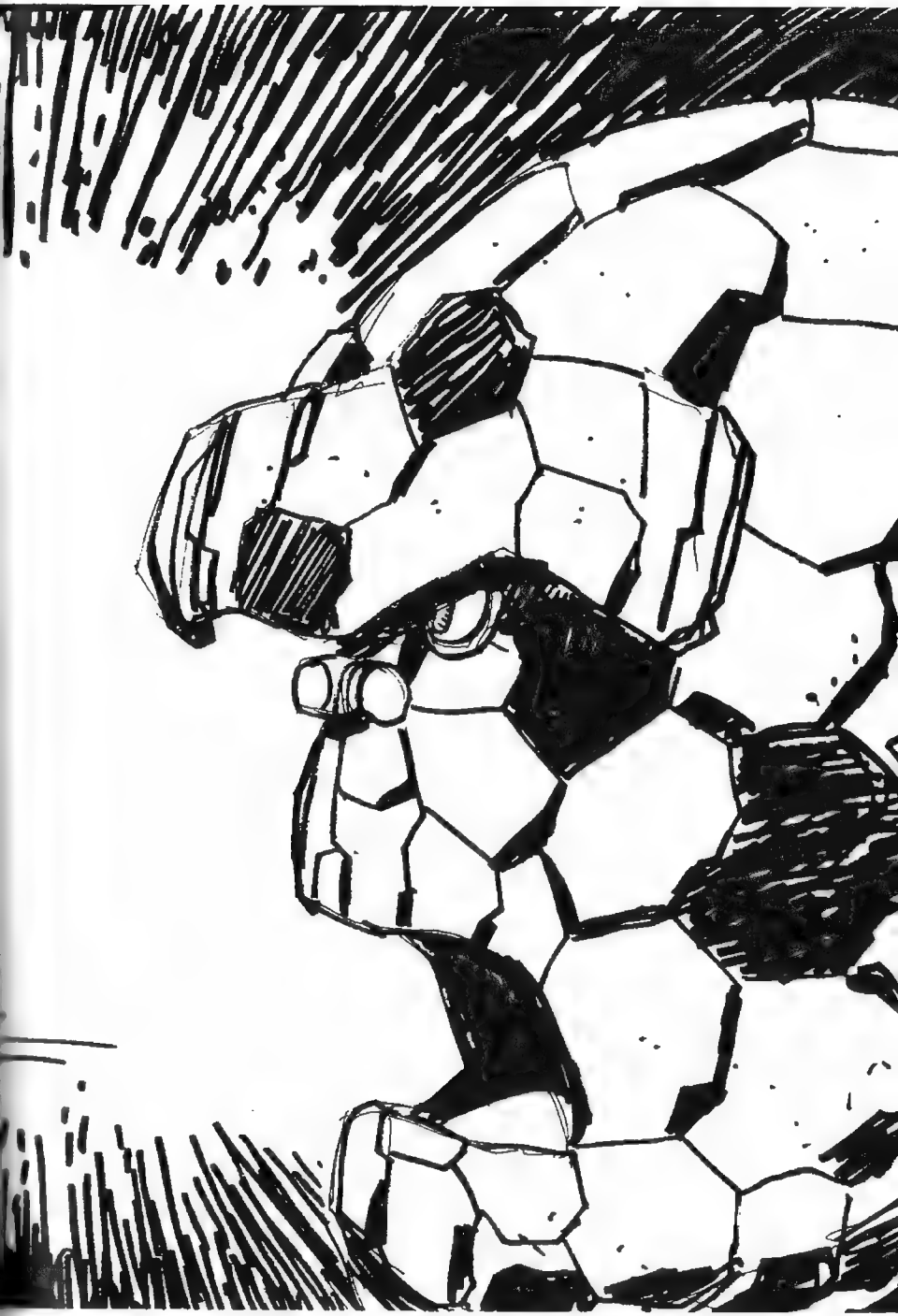


Did you know...
One of George's first characters he created for Marvel was the White Tiger, who happens to be the first Puerto Rican superhero.

George drew this picture of Guy Gardner in 2002 for Michael White.

Ganthet the Guardian was drawn
for Eric Sellers in 2003.

Check out the eyes!!!



Hulk out-shouting the Thing, courtesy Rich D'Allesandro.

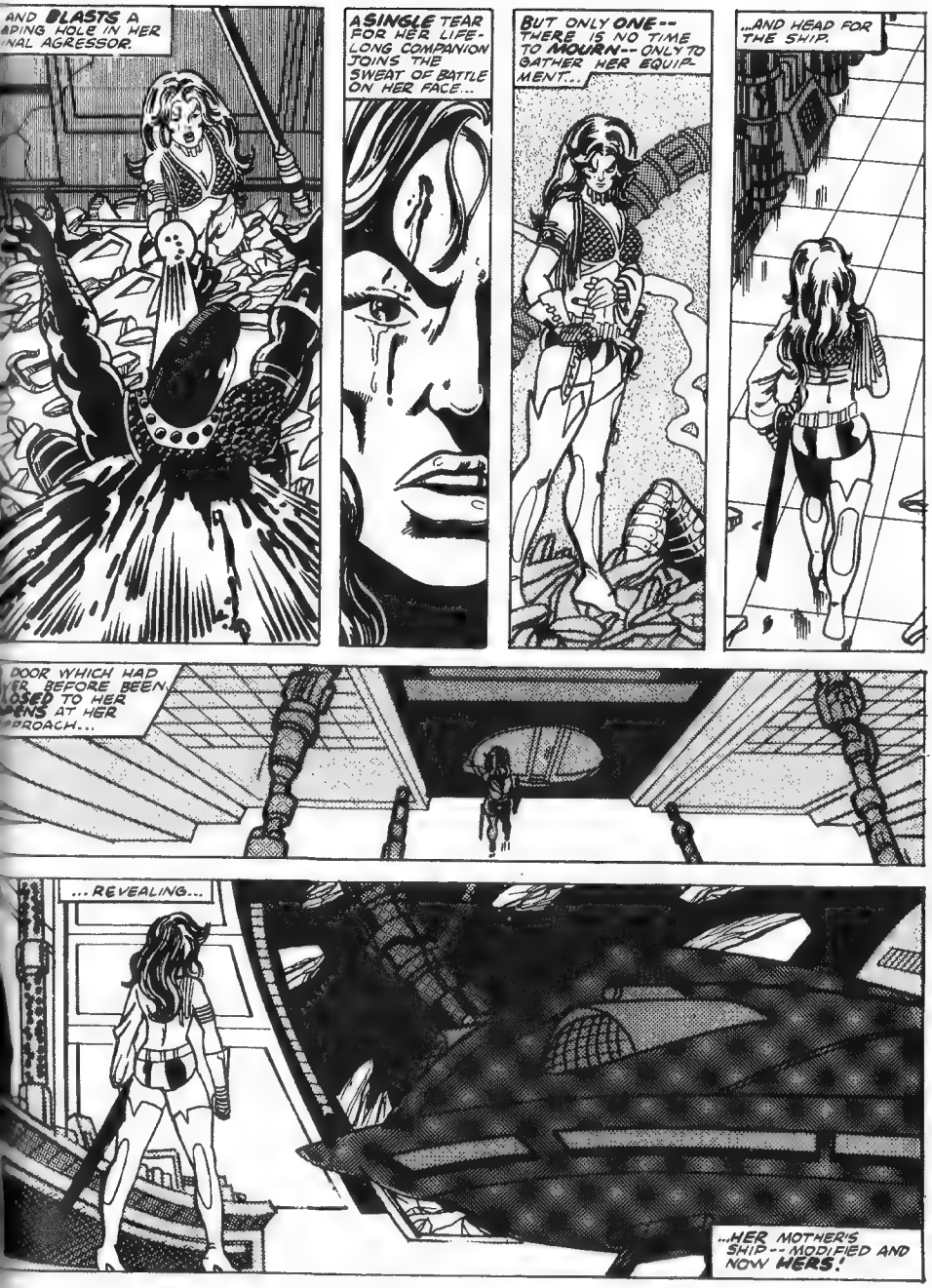
Invisible Woman, courtesy of Stephan Varnier.

Did you know...

George's first professional work was a 2-page back-up in ASTONISHING TALES issue 25 for Marvel.

Cover art to Justice League of America #207

"LET THE COMBAT BEGIN!"



Bill Walko kindly provided these scans from Oracle #1, from 1978. "Let the Combat Begin!"

An early convention sketch of Deathstroke vs. Starfire from 1981.

This piece was used as the letters-pages header art during George's tenure on Wonder Woman.

Marvel Age #122, pencils by Darren Auck and inks by Pérez.

Did you know...

George's first series drawn for DC Comics was a back-up series in FLASH... Firestorm!

Flash #289, September 1980

This art was used in the 1986 DC Comics Wall Calendar poster.

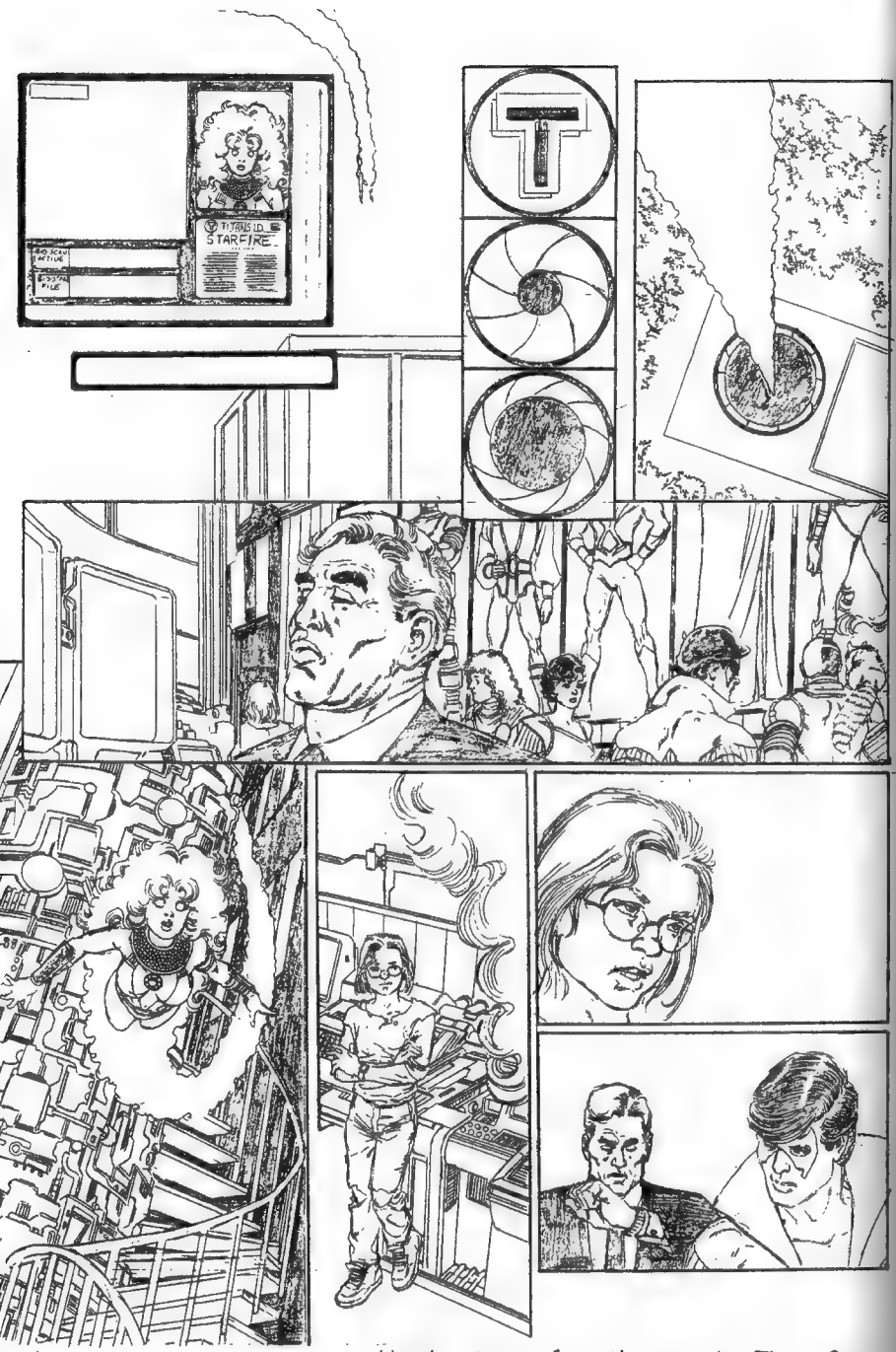
Looks familiar, doesn't it?
This art originally appeared in a supplement to the ORLANDO SENTINEL from March 29, 1999.
For this issue of PACESETTER, George redrew portions of the original (including some details on himself!) and added several characters. Tom Smith then wove his magic over the entire piece, blending it all together with color and special effects. The result... dazzling!

George was requested to do a Pérez-style version of the Scooby Doo gang. He drew this commission piece for Marcus in 2002, while he was on vacation in England. He did it completely from memory, and it was the only commission piece he drew during that trip!

Sinestro, courtesy of Eric Sellers.

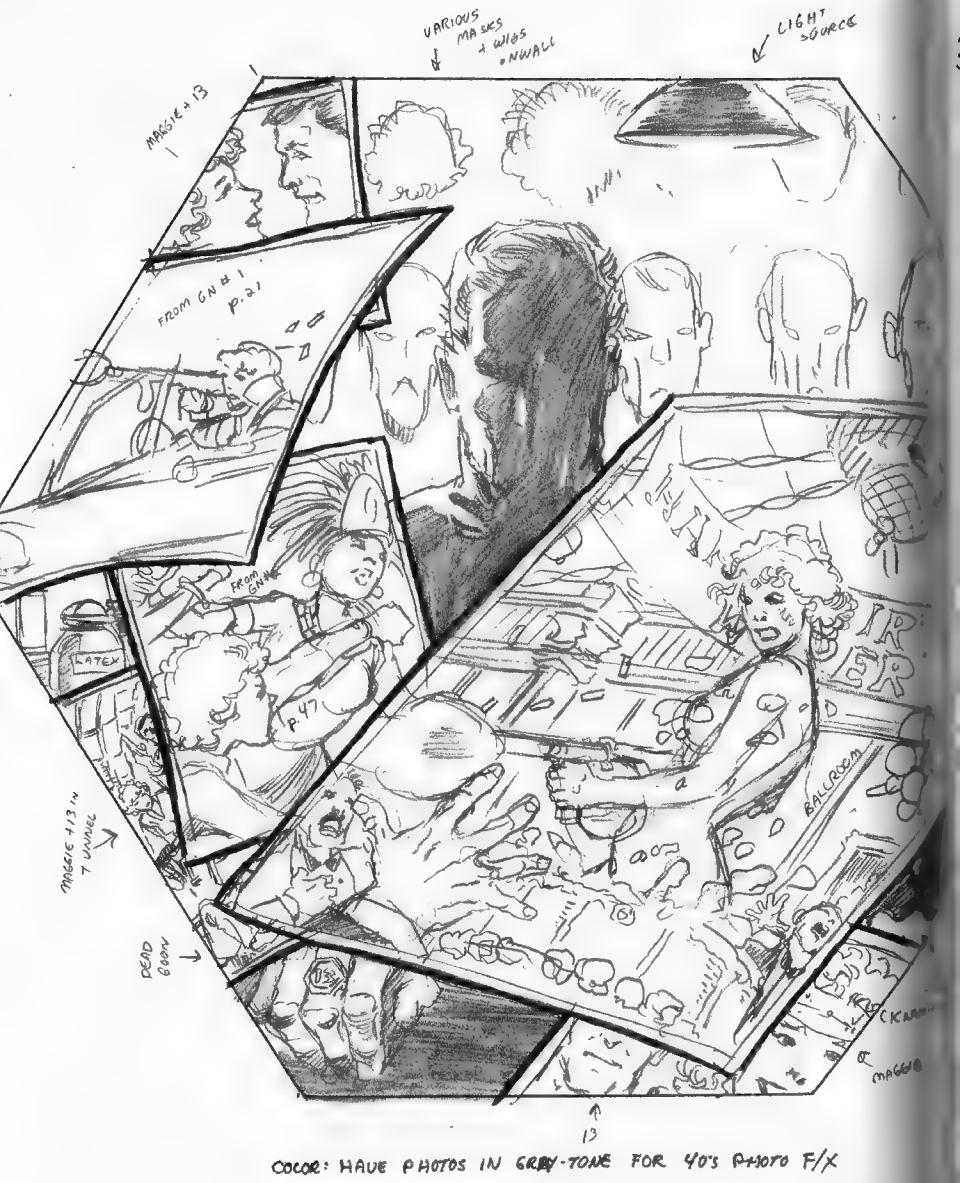
Gamorrean Guard. George worked on this piece for a Star Wars trading card set... courtesy of Don Guyton.

This lovely Star Sapphire piece was
hand-colored by Tom Smith.
Sadly, we only print in black-and-white...
but at least the tones show the work
that Tom put into this!

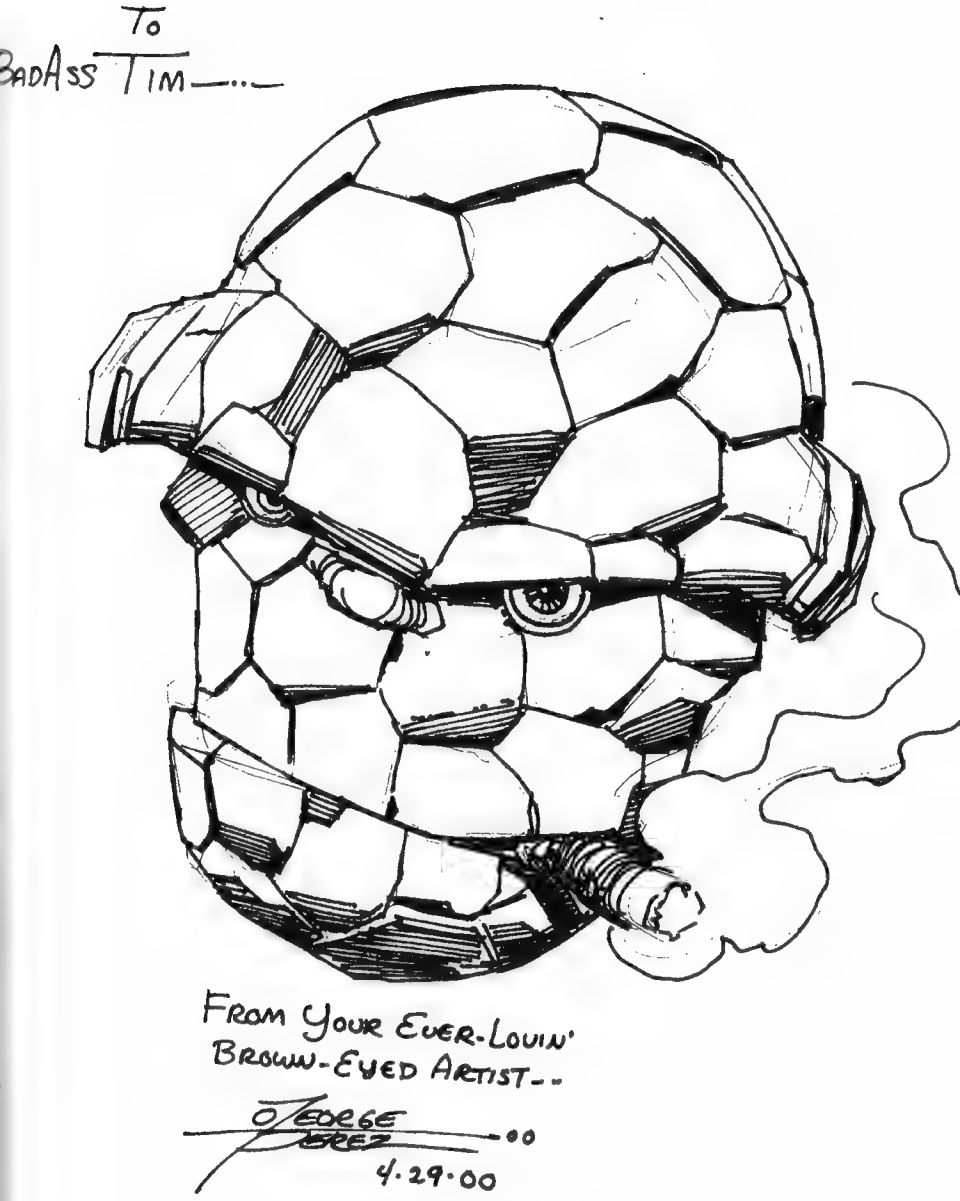


Here's a teaser from the upcoming Titans:Games graphic novel... the pencils for page 20.

And here we have a completed page from the Titans: Games graphic novel. Inks by Al Vey.



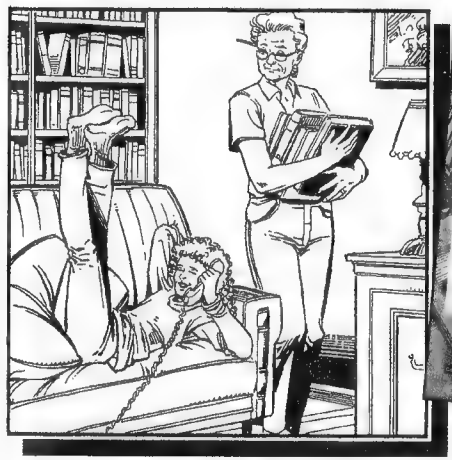
A very rough cover layout for TSR's 13 Assassin, issue #5.



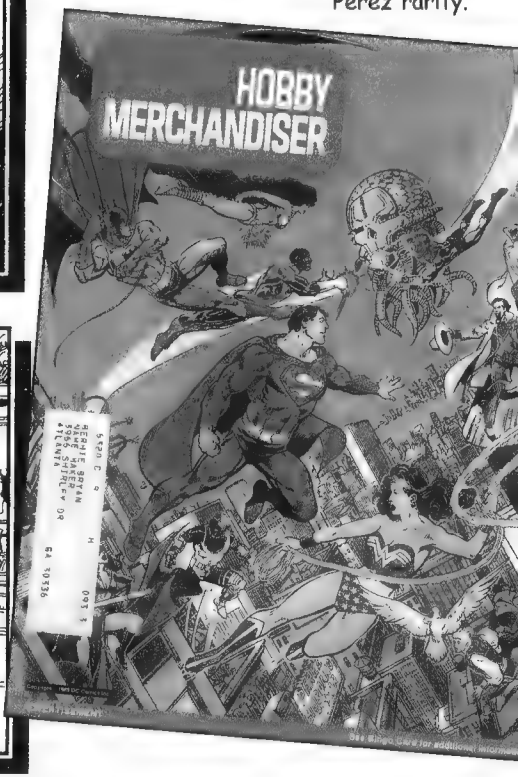
Tim MacDonald shares this fun Thing sketch that he got in 2000.

Looks like George must have enjoyed drawing this piece for the Vampirella Trading Card!

George inked these character close-ups for the "Wonder Woman Supporting Cast" entry in DC Comics' WHO'S WHO #7 from 1991, penciled by Chris Marrinan.



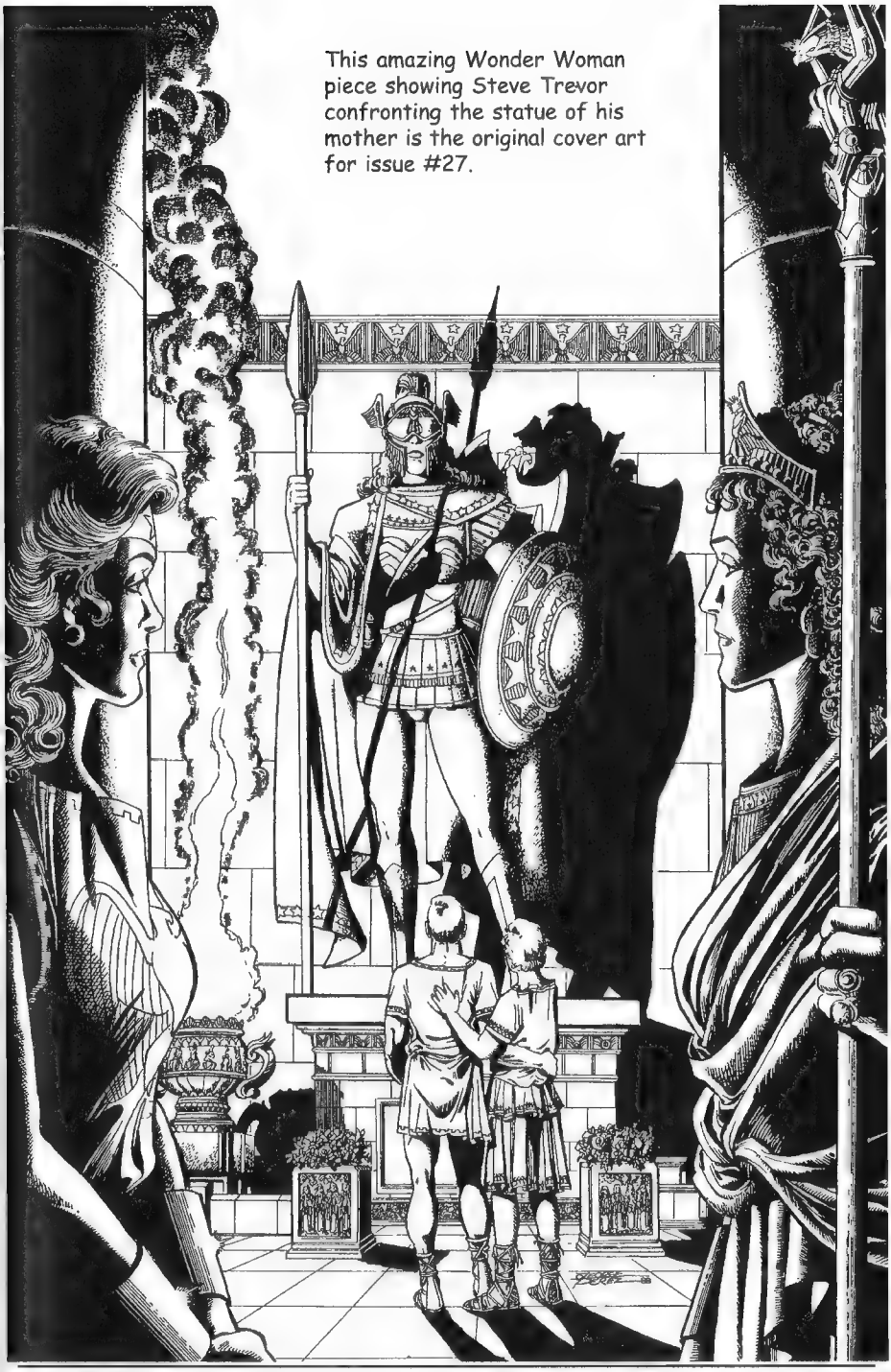
Around the time DC Heroes role-playing game was released, HOBBY MERCHANDISER featured the product on their distributor magazine... an interesting Pérez rarity.



MARVEL CARDS 1993 #136: THE ORIGIN OF WOLVERINE
Skybox/Marvel Comics

MARVEL CARDS 1993 #136: THE ORIGIN OF WOLVERINE
Skybox/Marvel Comics

Clint Cox got this Wolverine Sketch in 2001.



This amazing Wonder Woman piece showing Steve Trevor confronting the statue of his mother is the original cover art for issue #27.

George inked the cover for this, Gay Comics #20 in 1993, which was pencild by J.A. Fludd!

This exceptional Green Arrow portrait was commissioned by Mike Negin in 2003.

And this piece was too stunning to put text on it. Mike Negin certainly has some prizes in his collection!

Mike Negin also kindly provided this lovely portrait of Wanda for inclusion in the gallery!

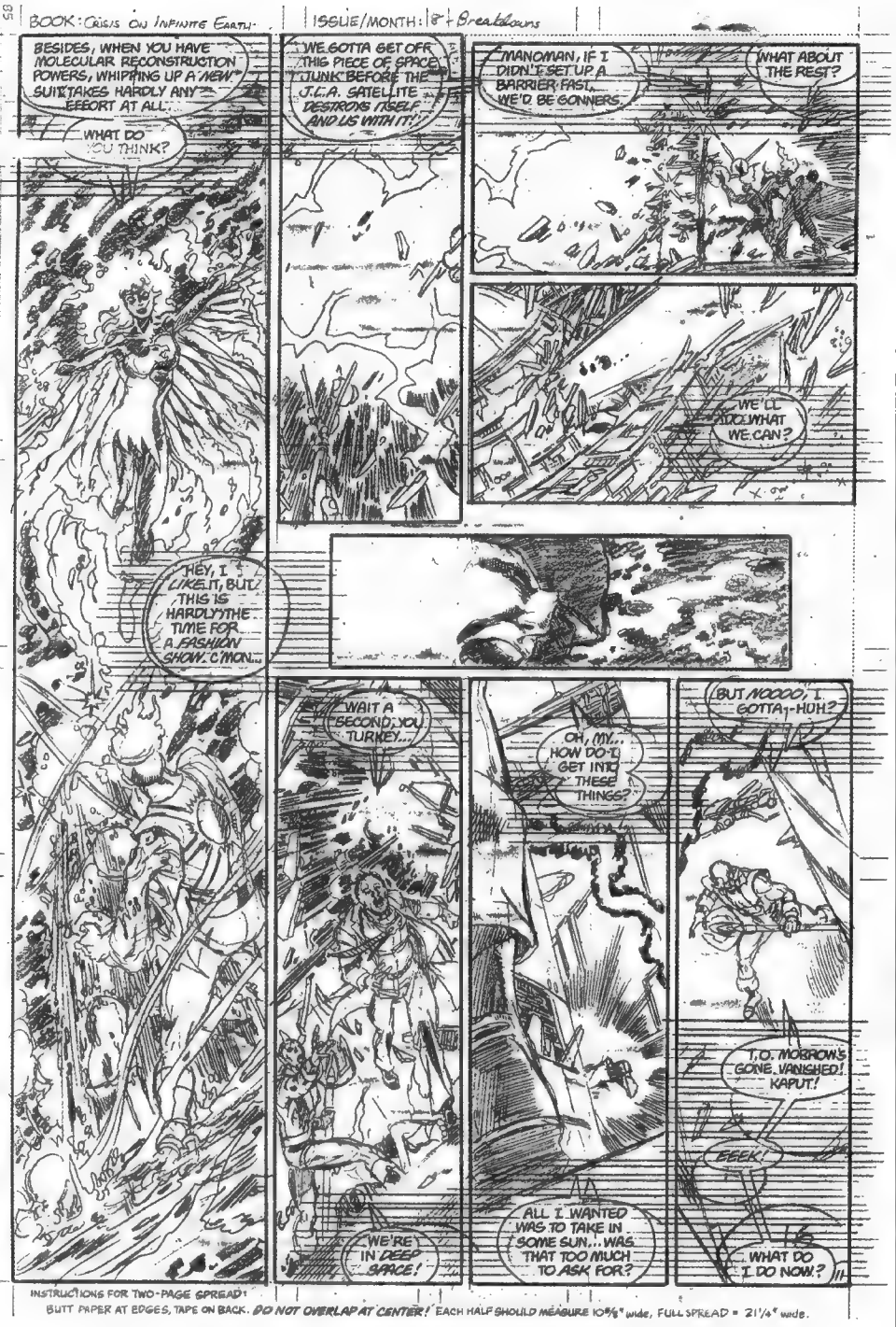
TO MIKE -
BEST.
.01

The back cover for the looseleaf Who's Who Binder from DC Comics, 1990, showing (clockwise from top left): Mr. Mxyzptlk, Cheetah, Darkseid, the Penguin, Lex Luthor, and the Joker.

The original line art for the cover of Teen Titans v.2 #10, pencils by Dan Jurgens.

OOK: CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS
ISSUE/MONTH: 8 - Breakdowns
BLUE = BLEED
ON THE OTHER DIMENSIONAL WORLD OF APOKOLIPS.....
GREAT DARKSEID, LOOK!
IT IS THE ONE WE HEARD ABOUT... THE ONE WHO DESTROYED ALL THOSE UNIVERSES.
WHAT CAN WE DO TO STOP HIM, GREAT ONE?
SILENCE YOUR SNIVELLING, DESAAD. I HAVE ALREADY TAKEN "CERTAIN PRECAUTIONS".
LET EARTH'S HEROES BATTLE THE INTERLOPER TO THE DEATH. SHOULD THEY BE VICTORIOUS, THE "STATUS QUO" WILL BE MAINTAINED...
THAT MONITOR INDEED POSSESSES THE POWER TO DESTROY EVEN HARSH APOKOLIPS...
...BUT I HAVE DIVERTED ALL OUR ENERGY TO "CLOAK" OUR PRESENCE HERE.
SHOULD THE INTRUDER WIN, HE WILL CERTAINLY BE WEAKER FOR THE BATTLE.
...AND IT SHALL BE TRULY SIMPLE FOR ME TO SEE HIM DESTROYED!
WITH PATIENCE SHALL COME VICTORY. REMEMBER THAT "LESSON," DESAAD.
IT HAS SERVED ME WELL THROUGHOUT ETERNITY.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TWO-PAGE SPREAD:
BUTT PAPER AT EDGES, TAPE ON BACK. **DO NOT OVERLAP AT CENTER!** EACH HALF SHOULD MEASURE 10⅝" wide, FULL SPREAD = 21¼" wide


BOOK: Crisis On Infinite Earths
ISSUE/MONTH: 8 + Breakdowns
BESIDES, WHEN YOU HAVE MOLECULAR RECONSTRUCTION POWERS, WHIPPING UP A "NEW" SUIT TAKES HARDLY ANY EFFORT AT ALL.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
HEY, I LIKE IT, BUT THIS IS HARDLY THE TIME FOR A FASHION SHOW. C'MON...
WE GOTTA GET OFF THIS PIECE OF SPACE "JUNK" BEFORE THE J.C.A. SATELLITE DESTROYS ITSELF AND US WITH IT!!
MANOMAN, IF I DIDN'T SET UP A BARRIER FAST, WE'D BE GONNERS.
WHAT ABOUT THE REST?
WE'LL DO WHAT WE CAN?
WAIT A SECOND, YOU TURKEY...
WE'RE IN DEEP SPACE!
OH, MY... HOW DO I GET INTO THESE THINGS?
ALL I WANTED WAS TO TAKE IN SOME SUN... WAS THAT TOO MUCH TO ASK FOR?
BUT, NOOOO, I GOTTA - HUH?
T.O. MORROW'S GONE... VANISHED! KAPUT!
EEEK!
WHAT DO I DO NOW?
INSTRUCTIONS FOR TWO-PAGE SPREAD:
BUTT PAPER AT EDGES, TAPE ON BACK. DO NOT OVERLAP AT CENTER! EACH HALF SHOULD MEASURE 10⅝" wide, FULL SPREAD = 21¼" wide.

Crisis #8, pages 3 and 11. These scans were provided to us by Jerry Ordway.

SGT. PEPPER'S LONELY HEARTS CLUB BAND
j zijn Sgt.Pepper's
nely Hearts Club
nd...we hopen
t u onze show
t waarderen.
Wij zijn Sgt.Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band...zet u schrap en GENIET van deze avond.
Het is geweldig om hier te zijn! Wat een fijne show!
U bent een REUZE publiek...we mogen u allen graag.
wil de show niet ON-
ERBREKEN, maar ik
acht dat u zoudt willen
weten...
...dat onze leider een LIED wil zingen...en hij hoopt dat u allemaal MEEZINGT!
Mag ik u daarom VOORSTE
LEN aan onze enige...

14

Mark McIntosh provided these Sgt. Pepper pages... here we have page 14, inks by Jim Mooney.

These two pages are from a Danish version of the book. This is page 38. Inks by Jim Mooney.

VEN SO--"F.V.B." IS NOT ASSURED OF AN EASY VICTORY.
KRAKK!
TAKE THAT, YOU RAT!
SMACK!
DON'T FIGHT! LISTEN, WE'LL MAKE YOU RICH--JOIN US!
NEVER, LOOTER!
UH, OH!
FORGET ME, BILLY--SAVE THE INSTRUMENTS!
NO WAY, MARK!
WE ALL WIN TOGETHER, OR WE ALL LOSE--AND DIE--TOGETHER!
IS MORE THAN MERE BATTLE TWEEN GOOD D EVIL...
T IS THE FIGHT RESTORE HONOR ND VALUE TO LIFE!
CHEW ON THIS, PEA-BRAIN!
BRUTE FLIES BACK--AND CRASHES AGAINST STRAWBERRY'S POST--UNCONSCIOUS.
THE POLE BENDS UNDER THE SUDDEN STRAIN--
--CRACKS--
--AND BEFORE ANYONE CAN REACT--
--BREAKS AND TOPPLES OFF THE TOWER!
STRAWBERRY!

Here's some clean line-art from Sgt. Pepper, page 41, inks by Jim Mooney.

Mark McIntosh commissioned this Thanos in 2001.

NEWS and EVENTS

PUBLICATIONS:

AVENGERS FINALE #1
Nov 2004
$4.99
Marvel
writer: Brian Bendis/Dave Finch
art: George Pérez, David Mack, Mike Oeming

JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA TPB #1
2004
$14.95
DC Comics
writer: Gerry Conway
art: Dick Dillin, George Pérez, Romeo Tanghal, etc.

SILVER COMICS #3
Nov 2004
$2.95
Silver Comics
Comic Book (48 pages)
Cloud Buster
writer: Johnny Ortiz/Dan Beltran
art: Ruben Procopio, Dennis Rau, George Pérez

COMMON GROUNDS TPB
Nov 2004
$19.99
Top Cow
Trade Paperback (144 pages)

BACK ISSUE #7
Nov 2004
$5.95
TwoMorrows
writers: Denny O'Neil, Michael Eury
artists: Kieron Dwyer, John Romita, Sr, Alex Ross, Don Heck, June Brigman, Kerry Gammill, Carmine Infantino, John Byrne , Dick Giordano, Ramona Fradon, Mike W. Barr, Neal Adams, Nick Cardy, Walt Simonson, Terry Austin, Bill Sienkiewicz, Steve Rude, Moebius, George Pérez, etc...

BACK ISSUE #8
Jan 2004
$5.95
TwoMorrows
Magazine (100 pages)
writers: Denny O'Neil, Michael Eury
artists: Neal Adams, Arthur Adams, Bob McLeod, Jim Lee, Adam Hughes, Marv Wolfman, Gene Colan, George Pérez, etc...

EVENTS:

December 9, 2004: www.george-perez.com turns 6 Years Old!

GEORGE PÉREZ ON THE NET

There are countless websites with materials relating to George and his work. Here are some premier ones, each one verified at publication time by the editor.

(Yahoo Clubs - George Pérez) ***http://clubs.yahoo.com/clubs/georgePerez***
(JLA Avengers Port) ***http://www.fortunecity.com/business/bustwo/354/***
(The Powerful Art of George Pérez) ***http://www.comicbookpros.com/Perez.html***
(Vu's George Pérez Fansite - George Pérez.com) ***http://vu.morrissey-solo.com/moz/Perez/***
http://georgePérez.com/ *and* ***http://george-Perez.com/***
(The Artist's Choice - Pérez Art available for purchase) ***http://www.theartistschoice.com/***
(Solus fansite) ***http://www.flamingtelepaths.net/radiant/***
(Crossgen Official Site) ***http://www.crossgen.com/***
(Titans Tower - the most comprehensive Titans resource) ***http://www.titanstower.com/***
(Taskmaster) ***http://www.taskmastersite.com***
(Double Trouble Productions - Adult site) ***http://www.dtwrestling.com***
(Fantasy Wrestling - Adult site) ***http://www.sisterhoodofsuperheroines.com***
(Superheroines' Demise - Adult site) ***http://www.sooperhero.com***

I know as this magazine continues I will be adding more sites to the list. Please, if you know of any, e-mail me at ***tlorenz101@aol.com***

PACESETTER The George Pérez Magazine

Your comments, questions, and concerns are always welcome!

Hey Tony,

Just wanted to say that I got my copy of PACESETTER #4 yesterday. Great stuff! Carol's interview was one of my favorite parts and the animated interviews.

I also loved seeing all the art. Great job!

-Rich Bernatovech

Hi Tony,

I read everything and I must say... Amazing! You did a great job on it.

And thanks a lot for the other issues and everything else. I think I will pick up the next PACESETTERs, too. :-)

-Marina Müller, Germany

Thanks for the support! Great to hear that you plan to pick up the next issue of PACESETTER. If you like the magazine that much, get involved! I'm always looking for contributors, so e-mail at Tlorenz101@aol.com if you have any questions.

Hi Tony!

Thank you so much for all the work you put into PACESETTER #4. I just finished reading all of it and it was the best so far!!!!! Thank you, Thank you, Thank you from all the Titans fans!!! You did an unbelievable job. I was wondering if the artwork from the galleries is located online anywhere. I wanted to scan them from my book, but don't want to ruin the spine. So I thought maybe you had them uploaded, especially the alternate cover to NTT #39. I loved this!!! Have a great day!!

-Kirk (kirk310@hotmail.com)

Much of the art featured in the Pérez Titans gallery can be found at www.titanstower.com. There's also some on Vu's "must-see" George Pérez website. Check out www.george-perez.com and Titans Tower right away!

Tony,

I really enjoyed the latest issue of the PACESETTER. Nice Job!! I'm a lifetime TITANS fan all because of George. The only thing that I didn't like was there weren't enough pages in the magazine. I was hoping for at least a 100 page Monster Edition. Heck, Not a bad complaint if you're going to have one.

I know this is a fan endeavor but I was hoping we would get a interview with George in every issue. I also would have liked to see interviews with Dan Jurgens or Eddie Berganza on George's other TEEN TITANS assignment and either Mike McKone or Geoff Johns from the current version of the TEEN TITANS and how George's work influenced them.

I was hoping to see some more TITANS "Games" pages published in the magazine.

Also any chance of the Fun Page returning?

-Eric Sellers

Eric you always ask some excellent questions! You are for sure one of my biggest supporters and I thank you. 1. This last issue was the first issue without an interview with George and it was mainly because with wrapping up work on AVENGERS/JLA George really didn't have time. 2. Thanks for suggesting those people for future interviews. I'll work on that. 3. Look for more GAMES pages in this very issue and future issues as well. 4. And to answer your last question about the Fun Page, if anyone wants to do it, I'll publish it every issue, that's how Bobby's FOCUS ON feature started. So Eric, get cracking! That sounds like a fun regular feature!

Tony,

The issue is full of terrific articles, my personal favorite is the Carol Flynn article/interview and the interviews with Sam Register & Glen Murakami. I think there should be more interviews like this... especially people outside of the comic book medium. Not to say that the interviews with Marv Wolfman or Phil Jimenez aren't nice!

I have to say that the printing

Your comments, concerns, questions and feedback are greatly appreciated. If you have some ideas on how to improve the magazine, if you have a complaint, if you have a request, or if you just want to share some thoughts, email Tony at TLorenz101@aol.com.

of images didn't look quite as good... The text is still sharp enough to read, but as this book keeps printing more and more artwork, it gets hard to NOT notice these flaws.

Straight black and white of art looks great. It's only the colored ones (converted to grayscale) that are giving me grief.

Anyway, don't let that stop you from picking up this jam-packed issue. Never been a better time to be a Titans fan!

-Vu Nguyen

Vu, thanks for your honest feedback. I personally think the printing and production has gotten better with each issue. I've even used a pre-press service for pages that I convert to grayscale. It cost me more, but was worth the effort. I'm going to try a new printer with issue 5... not that I'm not happy with my previous printer; I just think I might even get even better printing quality with this printer that prints digitally, and my production man happens to work there, too! So I'll be curious to see feedback for issue #5 on the printing quality. Thanks Vu for all your support! Let's have another feature for the magazine.

The following was a nice review of PACESETTER by Jason Sacks on the Silver Bullet website: http://www.silverbulletcomicbooks.com/

LINE OF FIRE REVIEWS:
Pacesetter: The George Pérez Magazine #4
Posted: Tuesday, August 10
By: Jason Sacks
Published by Tony Lorenz
PACESETTER #4 (Jul 2004)

It's so fun to read a print fanzine these days. I love the convenience and depth of material you can find on the web, but there's something that's just special about holding a printed fanzine in your hands. PACESETTER is the perfect example of why 'zines are special. This issue, the special Teen Titans issue, contains page after page after page of interviews, articles and art discussing Pérez and his work on the Titans. It's a treat to flip through the 84 pages in the 'zine and find a 25+ page art gallery or interviews about the Titans cartoon or a long piece on stories that ended up on "The Cutting Room Floor" (as the piece was called).

This is a nicely professional-seeming 'zine. The color cover looks terrific, and the editor took pains to provide really diverse content while making sure to include plenty of what the readers really care about—lots of obscure George Pérez art.

I'm not a huge fan of Pérez, but I found a lot to enjoy in this 'zine. Plus my copy arrived autographed by both Pérez and his wife Carol Flynn! Too cool!

$6.95 from larger comic shops (I saw it at Comics Dungeon in Seattle today) or find information from Tlorenz101@aol.com about ordering it by mail.

Don't forget to check out ***The Artist's Choice*** *website for original George Pérez art, as well as the works of many other artists!*

www.theartistschoice.com *· You'll be glad you did!*

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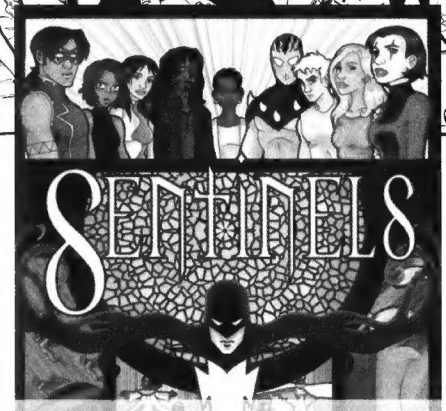
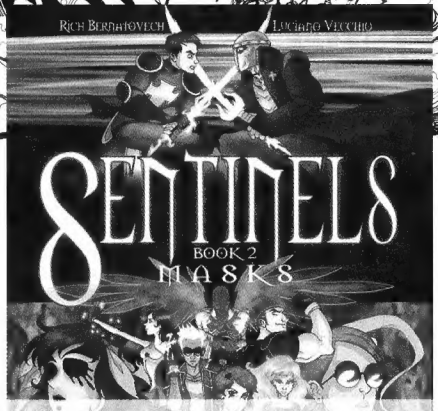


Book 1: Footsteps

Years ago, the superhero team, Sentinels, disappeared. Now, their children have taken their place. Are they destined to meet the same fate as their predecessors? Forces from every angle try to pull the team apart as they find that their greatest challenge might just be living up to the name Sentinels.
By Rich Bernatovech and Luciano Vecchio.
216 pages, black and white.



Book 2: Masks

Following the events from Sentinels Book 1: Footsteps, the Sentinels fight to save former associates from being murdered. Will teaming up with their enemies be enough to stop the mysterious Lightbringer? More secrets and the person behind their problems is revealed!
By Rich Bernatovech and Luciano Vecchio.
216 pages, black and white.

Sentinels Book 1: Footsteps and Book 2: Masks are $14.95 each, which includes shipping inside the U.S. (outside U.S. shipping will be charged and varies depending on country).

PÉREZ FANS!
Book 1 features FIVE Pinups by George Pérez. This is something you MUST have!

Checks or money orders can be sent to:
Rich Bernatovech • 802 9th Ave. #1A • NYC, NY 10019
Please make payments to: **Rich Bernatovech**

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Official website: **www.sentinelsonline.com**

Back issues of *The George Pérez Newsletter* and *Pacesetter* are still available!

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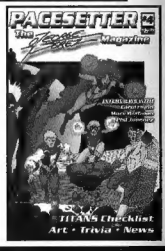

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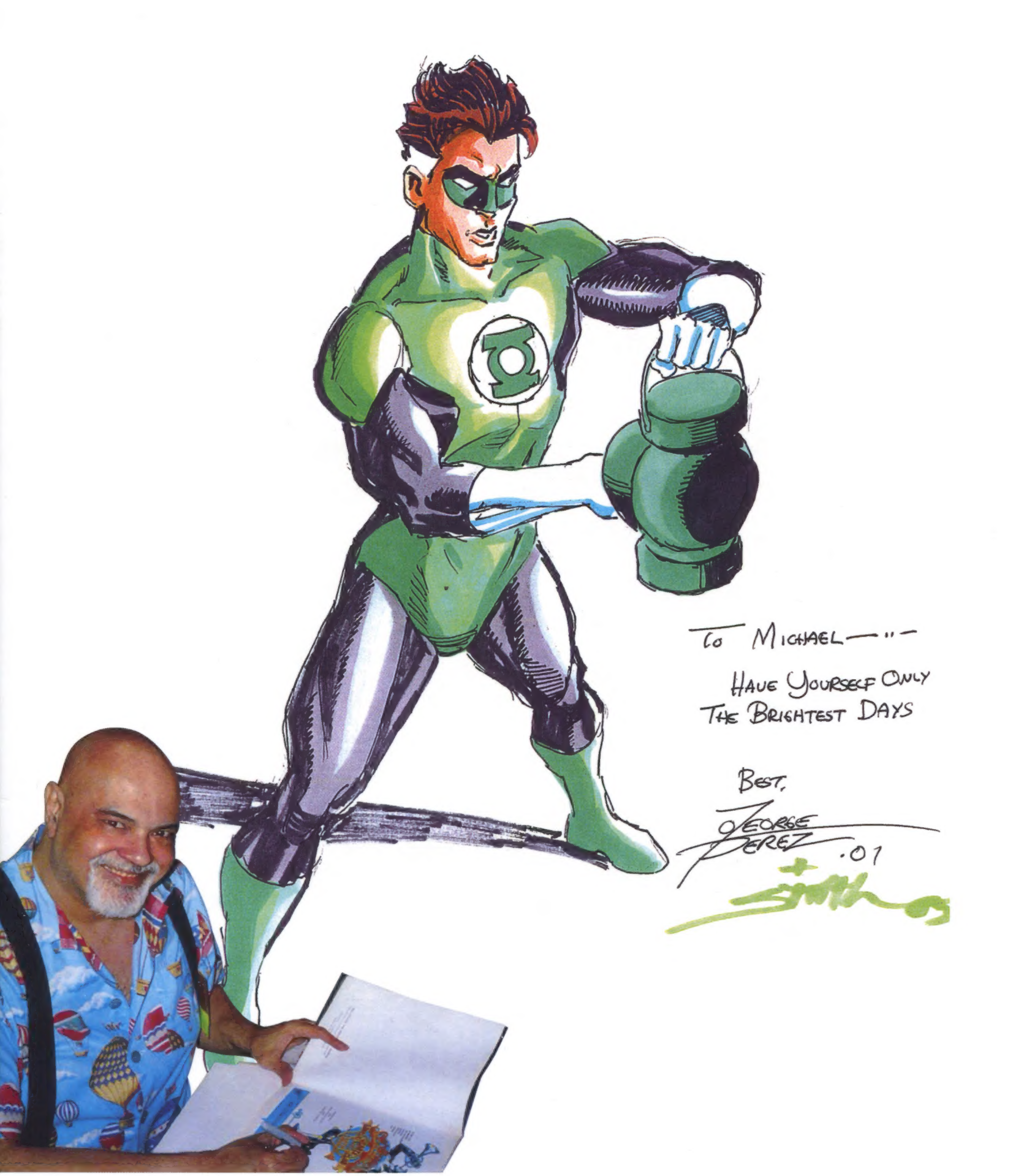
Come Join the Fun! Contributors Always Needed!

Articles, Artwork, Photos, Fan Art, Trivia, News, Checklist Assistance, etc...



The purpose of *Pacesetter, The George Pérez Magazine* is to provide a venue to display the incredible art of this exceptional artist, and to make available for perusal new interviews and insightful articles regarding Mr. Pérez, as well as to showcase artwork and talent inspired by his work.

The staff of *Pacesetter* strives to provide the most excellent product that we are capable of, and we welcome comments and criticisms. We make no claims to expertise, so if you find an error or discrepancy, please notify us and we will amend it in the next issue.

We at *Pacesetter* thank you for purchasing this special endeavor. We hope you'll be with us for future issues.